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#1313!!

January 15, 1999

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See Page 41

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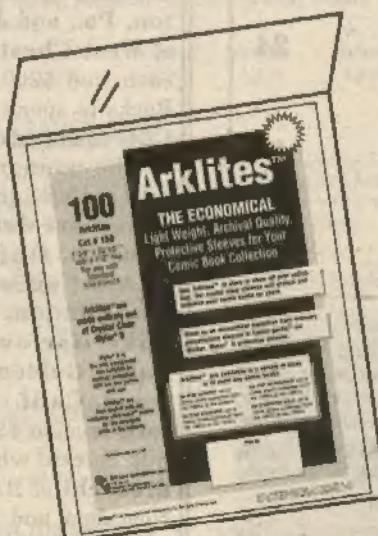
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This week in **CBG**



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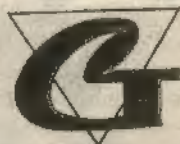
On the cover

Luck, or the lack thereof, has been the theme of several memorable comics stories and the motif of a number of characters. This week, **CBG** rolls the dice to see whether they come up "lucky sevens" or "snake eyes."

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Gladstone gives up its golden egg

Bruce Hamilton has announced that the issues of *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories* and *Uncle Scrooge* that shipped in late December will be the last Disney comic books his company will produce.



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Luck

It didn't take us long after getting into consideration of luck in comics before we realized we could only scratch the surface of the topic in a single **CBG** issue.

As so often happens in comics, the topics are so vast and the number of comics to be considered are so varied that any article will only bring up the topic, hit a few high spots, and end.

When Craig Shutt, for that matter, expanded the topic of luck in comic books to the sidebar of characters who got a lucky break in Hollywood, he neglected that story — was it in the '70s? — which involved Thor and the making of a *Superman*-type movie on the life of Hyperion. Editor-writer Roy Thomas' idea was to have Wayne Boring (well known for his depiction of *The Man of Steel*) do a *Superman*-type story featuring Hyperion (Marvel's *Superman*-type character). Roy asked my late husband, Don, and me, long-time comics geeks, to concoct an elaborate plot which would make use of Boring's talents — and we thought the *Superman* movie provided an intriguing possibility. It's been a long time since I looked at the result (scripted by Roy), but I do recall his amused complaint that we'd packed the plot almost *too* full. But I digress.

The point is that I've just proofread Craig's piece, and he doesn't mention Hyperion anywhere. Tsk.

On the other hand, none of us in the office can remember exactly when or where the story appeared. (Was it in a *Thor* annual? If it was, that means we plotted *two* in the long-ago world of Marvel. So maybe it appeared somewhere else.)

And that brings to mind that we wanted to remind readers to respond to **CBG's** brainstorming — both on matters of luck-associated characters and, for that matter, on Hollywood-related comics stories. What springs to *your* mind that we've been unlucky enough to overlook?

With this being #1313, there *must* be something.

What started as a flippant editorial turned serious — and still *more* serious — as two industry departures drew our attention just before Christmas. News of the first quickly spread through the industry with the published announcement, almost concurrent with last week's story of Kitchen Sink's closing, of the end of Bruce Hamilton's Gladstone comics line of Disney material. You'll find details on Page 6 — and note that Bruce finds this an appropriate issue of **CBG** for the news.

Sad news of a more personal nature — yet news deeply entwined in the history of the field — is the death of Joe Orlando at the age of 71. The announcement came too late for us to do more than acknowledge his passing in this issue. The artist, production manager, and creative director was involved over the years with some of the most striking work in the art form — and his supportive encouragement reached beyond the work of professionals to touch his fans, as well.

— Maggie Thompson

CBG Lucky #1300 winners

Congratulations to the winners in our "Lucky #1300" contest. From the hundreds of entries received, subscribers Thomas H. Miller of Shillington, Pa., and Joe DiConcilio of West Chester, Ohio, have each won \$200 in **CBG** Bonus Bucks to spend with any single **CBG** dealer advertiser.

The winners in our store copy contest (and their winning stores) are Jeff Kadlecik of London, Ontario, Canada (B.A.'s Comics and Nostalgia, London, Ontario), and Mike Harlow of Burbank, Calif. (Golden Apple, Hollywood, Calif.). Jeff and Mike each receive \$200 in **CBG** Bonus Bucks, while Bruno Andreacchi of B.A.'s Comics and Nostalgia and Bill Liebowitz of Golden Apple will each receive \$250 in advertising vouchers for **CBG** and/or *Comics Retailer*.



CBG Editor Maggie Thompson (left) and **CBG** Publisher Mark Williams (right) sifted through the entries to find the winners.

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14⁹⁵

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- **LETHAL STRIKE**—ready to slice and dice with her ninja sai in each hand!

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19⁹⁵

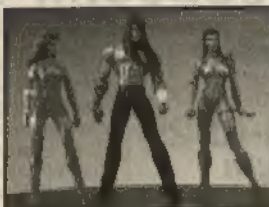
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10⁹⁵

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19⁹⁹

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24⁰⁰

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69⁹⁹

Per Pack
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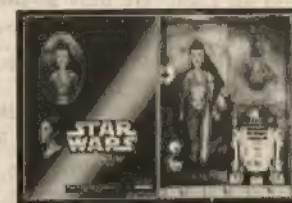
STAR WARS: PRINCESS LEIA COLLECTION 12" LEIA & R2-D2 FIGURES TWO-PACK

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69⁹⁹

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PREVIEWS

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Gladstone runs out of luck?

Well — it's not what you may think

By Maggie Thompson

Bruce Hamilton's announcement appeared in Gladstone material shipped in late December: "Most readers will not yet have heard that the February issues of *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories* and *Uncle Scrooge* ... will be the last comic books I will ever do." The last issue of the former is #633; the last issue of the latter is #318.

Reached at the office the day before Christmas, Hamilton — head of Hamilton Comics, Another Rainbow, and Gladstone, said, "We're going through enormous upheavals because of having to move our offices a block away. We've always been collector-oriented, so we don't throw things away and have quite an accumulation after 12 years."

However, his tone was upbeat, and he said of the text on the cover of this issue, "Luck has nothing to do with it in this case." On the other hand, he expressed delight with the issue's theme, "I find it amusing that this announcement is in *CBG* #1313, since Donald Duck's license plate and Another Rainbow's company van carry the license plate 313. The number 1313 has been used in the past, as well, in such Duck cartoons as 'Donald's Lucky Day.'"

Gladstone Gander's connection to luck can be seen on Page 36 of this issue — and many of Hamilton's projects in past years have been connected with the Disney Ducks, especially as connected with Gladstone Gander creator Carl Barks. And Hamilton said his businesses have done well for him. "We may be one of the first comics publishers in the history of the business to leave the scene, despite making money."

He emphasized, too, that neither his Bruce Hamilton Company nor Another Rainbow are going out of business. He has plans for new company projects in 1999.

"Nonetheless," he said, "most of the horror stories people have heard about

Gladstone's demise are true. The simple truth is that we have found it no longer tolerable to deal with The Walt Disney Company any more than is absolutely necessary ... When we first made contact with Disney almost 20 years ago, we found the company to be honorable, as good as its word, fun to deal with, deeply concerned over its image, and personally interested in a licensee's welfare." His published farewell included tributes to Disney staffers Barton K. Boyd and David Smith.

"We still have friends there, and I have a high respect for them and most of their employees. The biggest areas of concern that I have about dealing with them and about their future mostly concerns middle management and their legal department. The final story on this has yet to be written."

Subscriber Plans

And, indeed, Hamilton remained uncertain which of two scenarios will play out for subscribers to the Gladstone Disney comics.

"The first is that we have been in consultation with a company that has tentatively agreed to take over the reins. It is not possible that there won't be a gap between our last issues and the launching of a new continuity. We have, however, done preliminary work on three months' worth of comics, which we would be more than happy to turn over to this company. I expect a final consultation to take place between The Bruce Hamilton Company and Disney management some time in January. The future of the longest-running, best-selling comic-book title of all time, *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories*, is at stake."

The second scenario for subscribers is that, if such plans do not work out, the company will simply refund everyone's money. "That is guaranteed," Hamilton

said. "It isn't a case where Gladstone has gone bankrupt. We'll pay the money, if that is called for."

"What's going to happen with *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories*, come February, will be interesting."

He clearly hoped that the first plan would be put into effect. "I am uncomfortable with the awareness that two of our key people — Don Rosa and William Van Horn, who are working for Egmont in Europe — will be disappointed with justification, if the new stories they continue to do never appear in their homeland."

"The long and short of the situation is that we have made many proposals to Disney people over the last few months that would allow them to win, the collectors to win, the fans to win, the world market to win, and history to win. The proposals didn't involve the future of Gladstone, but virtually every proposal we have made has been arrogantly denied or, worse, ignored. And, to rephrase a line from a popular movie: I'm mad as hell and I'm not going to put up with it any more."

Gladstone began publishing *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories* with #511 (Oct 86); The Walt Disney Company itself took over the line with #548 (Jun 90) but eventually returned it to Gladstone with #586 (Aug 93).

"On a personal note," Hamilton said, "I'm sadder at the realization that I won't be able to continue publishing the Disney comic books as reading matter for my three grandsons than any concern I may have for Disney. I know there are people at the company who care, but most of the people I'm dealing with don't."

Staff — and evaluations

"If the arrangements can be made to transfer our license, which technically expires Dec. 31," Hamilton said, "the new company has agreed they would keep the



Hamilton (above) visited the *CBG* offices in 1984, two years before Gladstone Comics began its Disney comics line.

nucleus of the Gladstone staff — primarily John Clark, Gary Leach, and Susan Daigle-Leach." In his printed message, he described them as "the nucleus of our production staff."

He continued, "They are all still working for me, and John will stay on indefinitely, either as a part-time or full-time employee, depending on the direction Gladstone goes. I have been packing up a lot of our inventory and collectibles which have been accumulated over the last couple of decades and have found myself swept with understandable nostalgia."

"We did a damn good job on the Disney comics — and I know there are people at The Walt Disney Company who also know that is true. I would hate to have the legacy that we have left be ignored or let die for no good reason."

(Continues on Page 8)

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GLADSTONE (From Page 6)

"We've actually published more comics during Gladstone's run than the E.C. company did in its line in the '50s. Our role in history will reflect a body of work that has to measure up with the best. The grand total of comics we did hovers somewhere in the vicinity of 650 books."

He spoke with pride of his company's final comic-book output. "The *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories* and *Uncle Scrooge* comics we just shipped are closest to the best issues Gladstone ever put out, and we're proud of them. One of them even provides a brief reflection on Carl Barks' career written by Carl — absolutely the latest professional work he's done. It was magnificent."

Personal Plans

The Bruce Hamilton Company is in the midst of plans to put out its next lithograph "in about February, and my attorneys tell me that it is in no jeopardy."

"There is no reason why Another Rainbow should not continue to function as it has been for at least the next two or three years." Another Rainbow, founded in 1981, produced in the ensuing years a steady stream of collectible material, ranging in type from its well-known lithographs to the *Carl Barks Library* bound hardcover sets and even collectible, limited-edition sculptures."

The companies had occupied 5,000 square feet of business space; the contents

are being consolidated "to half the space in two smaller offices." Half the staff at the operation's height are no longer with the company, but the phone, fax, and postal service box will remain the same.

"I'm going to be heavily involved with fandom in other arenas," Hamilton said, "as well as remaining in collectibles." There will be news early in 1999 regarding a collectors service with which he has been involved since mid-summer.

As far as I'm concerned," Hamilton concluded, laughing, "everything's just ducky."

Even Heaven downsizes

In January, DC begins the story of what happens when Vext, the god of Mishap, finds himself out of a job due to "insufficient worshippers" and is banished to Earth. Written by Keith Giffen, Vext is drawn by Mike McKone and Mark McKenna and retails for \$2.50. The first issue features Vext's arrival in Delta City, where he obtains an apartment and meets his neighbors. Vext's powers, like those of several other DC characters, are luck-based. (For more on those folks, see Page 36). In this case, he has the power to attract bad luck from individuals, but, if they get too close to him, the bad luck boomerangs to them. In addition to appearances by Superman and Zauriel, the first few issues feature Vext's ex-fiancee Paramour and the minor deity Road Rage.

Gaiman goes on tour

Writer Neil Gaiman has announced his tour schedule to promote the new release of his *Stardust*. The book is the launching title for Avon Books' new "Spike" imprint, and the tour includes stops in the Midwest and on both coasts throughout January and into early February. Dates, locations, and times are as follows:

Jan. 8: Barnes & Noble, 3225 W. 69th St., Edina, **Minnesota** from 7 to 8 p.m.

Jan. 9: Dreamhaven-Books, 912 W. Lake St., Minneapolis, **Minnesota** from 2 to 4 p.m.

Jan. 10: Mysterious Galaxy, 3904 Convoy St., #107, San Diego, **California** from 4 to 5:30 p.m.

Jan. 11: Dangerous Visions, 13563 Ventura Blvd., Sherman Oaks, **California** from 6 to 8 p.m.

Jan. 12: Brentano's, 10250 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles, **California** from noon to 1:30 p.m.

Jan. 12: Vroman's, 695 E. Colorado Blvd., Pasadena, **California** from 7 to 9 p.m.

Jan. 13: Book Soup, 8818 Sunset Blvd., W. Hollywood, **California** from 8 to 11 p.m.

Jan. 14: Tattered Cover, 2955 E. 1st Ave., Denver, **Colorado** from 7:30 to 9 p.m.

Jan. 15: Library Limited, 7700 Forsyth Blvd., Clayton, **Missouri** from 7 to 9 p.m.

Jan. 16: Borders, 200 Mall Blvd., Monroeville, **Pennsylvania** from 12:30 to 2 p.m.

Jan. 19: Powell's, 1005 W. Burnside St., Portland, **Oregon** from 7:30 to 9 p.m.

Jan. 20: University Bookstore, 4326

University Way NE, Seattle, **Washington** from 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Jan. 21: Stacy's, 581 Market St., San Francisco, **California** from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.

Jan. 21: Booksmith, 1644 Haight St., San Francisco, **California** from 7 to 9 p.m.

Jan. 22: Kepler's, 1010 El Camino Real, Menlo Park, **California** from 7:30 to 9 p.m.

Jan. 23: The Other Change of Hobbit, 2020 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, **California** from noon to 2 p.m.

Jan. 27: Bibelot, 1819 Reisterstown Rd., Baltimore, **Maryland** from 7:30 to 9 p.m. **Jan. 28:** Gene's Books, King of Prussia Plaza, King of Prussia, **Pennsylvania** from 7 to 9 p.m.

Jan. 29: Barnes & Noble, 675 6th Ave., New York, **New York** from 7 to 8 p.m.

Jan. 30: Books & Co., 350 E. Stroop Rd., Dayton, **Ohio** from 1:30 to 3 p.m.

Feb. 3: University Bookstore, 711 State St., Madison, **Wisconsin** from 5:30 to 7 p.m.

Feb. 4: Stars Are Our Destination, 1021 W. Belmont, Chicago, **Illinois** from 6 to 8 p.m.

Feb. 5: Borders Books and Music, 612 E. Liberty, Ann Arbor, **Michigan** from 7 to 9 p.m.

Feb. 10: Mystery and Science Fiction Bookshop, 2000-F Cheshire Bridge Rd. NE, Atlanta, **Georgia** from 6 to 8 p.m.

Appearances of other creators can be found in *CBG's* weekly *Now Appearing* feature.

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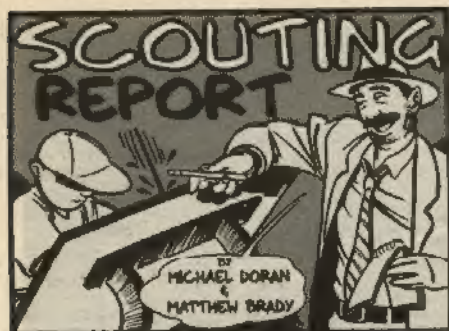
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Smith still set for *Green Arrow*. *Green Arrow* Editor Darren Vincenzo recently reported that current *Daredevil* writer (and big-time Hollywood guy) Kevin Smith is



Smith

still slated to pick up the reins on *Green Arrow*; however, finding time in Smith's hectic schedule is troublesome. "We're currently trying to work out a schedule for him to get his initial material in, so we can get our approvals and get the series up off the ground," Vincenzo said. "We were hoping to have things rolling by the end of this year, but, more realistically, it looks like we'll have things moving by early '99 — which by my estimate, means we'll see the comic book by mid to late '99."

While Vincenzo said he understood that pessimistic fans may be grumbling about a Kevin Smith-written

Green Arrow ever coming out, he reported that Smith's plans to write the series haven't wavered. "I've recently received e-mails from Kevin saying that he is alive and well and it's still his desire to bring *Green Arrow* back to a place of prominence in the DC universe," Vincenzo said. "Just hold tight — it will be here before you know it."



Aliens/Predator — new in '99. Don't look for Predators to fight the Colonial Infantry or Aliens to invade Communist China any more. Dark Horse is changing the way it tells Predator and Aliens stories.

The major change that will be apparent is that neither property will tell isolated story arcs in their mini-series. Rather, all Aliens and Predator mini-series in 1999 will tell their own respective ongoing, interconnected story. According to editor Phil Amara, the decision came as a means to revitalize the properties, which were, in Amara's opinion, in need of retooling. "As fun as it was seeing the Aliens and Predators in different eras, we weren't really going anywhere," Amara said. "They were kind of like Elseworlds stories for the Predators and Aliens, and, a lot of times, that sort of material is best when you have a running

continuity that you can spin off from. That's what we're going to focus on now — and tell an ongoing story in the mini-series that are coming up in '99."

The ongoing Predator storyline, written by James Vance with art by newcomer Toby Cypress will investigate why the Predators continually return to Earth, despite the fact that they usually return home with their dreadlocks between their legs, if they manage to leave the planet alive. "It's something they can't help," Amara said. "There's a deep secret about the Predators that one of the characters realizes early on, and it's something that will have major implications for Earth in the years to come. Let's just say the early visitations were only the beginning."

Meanwhile, over on the Aliens side of the projects, Mark Schultz and artist Doug Wheatley's storyline will explore the reasons behind the periodical Alien infestations and why the unstoppable bugs continually target mankind.

"The idea that the characters get in the Aliens series is that these creatures are somehow connected to the universe and act almost as the white cells of the universe, scrubbing clean anything that threatens the natural order," Amara said. "Apparently, man is a major threat, and the Aliens are looking to wipe us all out."

Finally, don't look for the revamped

and reconceptualized Aliens and Predators to meet soon. "The new direction isn't really designed to bring the two lines together in a major conflict," Amara said. "Rather, we're looking to firmly establish their own stories and reasons for doing what they do. However, there is an *Aliens vs. Predator* tentatively scheduled for the end of '99."

The inaugural Aliens relaunch series, *Aliens: Apocalypse*, begins in January, while *Predator: Homeworld*, which sets the stage for the Predators, begins in March.

Titans — who's in, who's out, and why. Writer of the current *JLA/Titans* mini-series and the upcoming *Titans* ongoing series Devin Grayson recently revealed the line-up of the new Titans team, and it's bound to please fans both new and old.

[**Spoiler Warning:** If you don't want to know what's coming up, skip to the next entry.]

According to Grayson, the line-up will be made of the original five Teen Titans in their current incarnations — Nightwing, Flash, Troia, Arsenal, and Tempest — along with Jesse Quick, Starfire, Damage, Argent, and Cyborg. "Titans #1 will show the original five Titans deciding which five other members they would like to include, as well as explaining why they've decided to

(Continues on Page 12)



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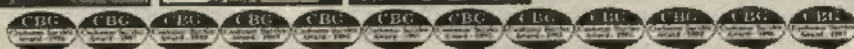
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SCOUTING

(From Page 10)

reform the team," Grayson revealed. "Then in *Titans Secret Files*, we actually see the original five approaching the other characters about membership."

Grayson also acknowledged that, with two former leaders on the team (Nightwing and Arsenal) and many of the members having had their own successful heroic careers, the leadership of the team will be contested.

"I left the issue of leadership up to the characters themselves to decide," Grayson said. "The answer will unfold slowly over the first year's arc. Initially, Nightwing sort of takes point, but most readers won't be able to guess who takes over from there."

Finally, while she said the membership should please old and new Titans fans, Grayson's plans for the Titans' enemies should be another crowd-pleaser.

"An all-new H.I.V.E. with a mysterious new backer will show up in the first issue," Grayson said. "The front man for the new group is a new character by the name of Damien Dahrk, who takes to heart the humorous 'If I were an Evil Overlord' e-mail created by Peter Anspach. The Titans meet a new villain named Goth in #3, and a highly dangerous group called 'Tartarus,' led by Vandal Savage, begin getting together around #5."



Schultz: Supes stays, Aliens attack, and more Xenozoic on the way ... kinda. Writer Mark

Schultz recently confirmed that, despite the recent creative shakeups in the Superman titles, he plans to remain on *Superman: The Man of Steel*, which he joins with #87, "as long as they'll have me."

"I really don't have any plans to leave, unless people aren't telling me something," Schultz said. "I'm having too much fun to leave and, with the volatility in the current market, it's nice to be on a fairly stable character like Superman."

In addition to his Super-stint, Schultz confirmed that he will head Dark Horse's Aliens relaunch, writing the initial *Aliens: Apocalypse* mini-series and at least plot '99's other upcoming Aliens projects. Along with Aliens, Schultz will write the *Young Queen Star Wars: The Phantom Menace* tie-in special this summer.

Finally, Schultz said that he is working on a new issue of his creator-owned *Xenozoic Tales*, but the going is slow. "It's just a matter of finding the time to get to it," Schultz said. "But I have been plugging away at it, and, hopefully, it'll be out by next fall."

'Avengers/JLA': Not Coming Your Way Soon. While both teams may be more popular now than they

have been in years, both Marvel and DC's key players are publicly admitting that an Avengers/JLA crossover is a slim possibility for the foreseeable future. "At the moment, there's really not much likelihood of this happening, for the following reason: If such a project were to be done, it would absolutely have to be pencilled by George Pérez," *Avengers* Editor Tom Brevoort said. "He got cheated out of it once before, years ago, and, as far as I'm concerned, he's got right of first refusal. In fact, I would actively move to halt any Avengers/JLA project that George was not the penciller of, unless he had turned the assignment down."

Brevoort added that, while, in his view, Pérez would have to pencil the crossover, he would be very reluctant to give up Pérez' pencils on the monthly *Avengers* so he could take time to draw any specials.

Pérez said that he's game for the project, as well, and, while he appreciates Brevoort's concerns, he has a potential solution. "It would be a dream come true, but I can understand any editor's desire not to take their creator away from their own titles for doing another," Pérez said. "An option might be to do an actual crossover where it stays in the continuity of the comics —



Pérez

where part one would be in *JLA*, with the regular creative team handling it as a regular issue or an annual, and ditto Marvel's end, where the *JLA* would guest-star in *Avengers*. That would also be the first time a thing like that has ever been done, but, because of the whole Access character, we're at a time where it actually could be done."

JLA writer Grant Morrison weighed in with his views on the potential project. "Actually, I've got no interest in writing it," Morrison said. "I'd like to read it, if Kurt writes it, but I've got absolutely no interest in it. Honestly, I just don't like Marvel enough to care if they ever meet. Kurt Busiek does, so it would be better if he writes it. If I wrote it, I'd heavily favor the *JLA*, and the story probably wouldn't work. Personally, the *JLA* could kick the Avengers' butt, and any story that suggested otherwise would seem kind of contrived."

While it may look bleak for any such Avengers/JLA team-up, Pérez concluded that, in today's market, no one can say what fans will see. "Naturally, it's something that would have to have high-up approval from both Marvel and DC," Pérez said. "And, with all the restructuring that Marvel is doing lately, anyone who might've said yes to the deal last week may not even be there today, and vice versa — so we'll have to wait and see."



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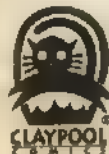
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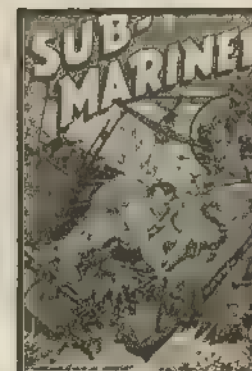
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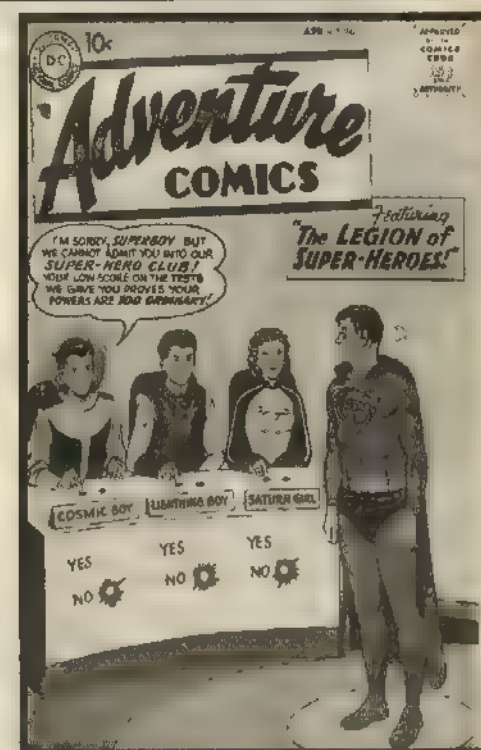
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Nelson Jimenez
75 Maple Tree Ave.
Stamford, CT 06906

I know it's probably late but I wanted to send in a list of my favorite comic-book Christmas stories of the past few years:

- Darkseid, "Present Tense," *DC Universe Holiday Bash II* (1998)
- Archie, "Mall Be Home for Christmas," *Archie and Friends* #13 (1995)
- Willie Lumpkin, "Companions," *Spider-Man Holiday Special* (1995)
- New Gods, "A Highfather Christmas," *DC Universe Holiday Bash* (1997)
- Bone, "Happy Winter Solstice," *Hero Holiday Special* (1993)
- ProtoTykes, "Claus & Effect," *Hero Holiday Special* (1994)
- Man, "Living for Christmas," *Comico Christmas Special* #1 (1988)
- O. Henry's "Gift of the Magi," *Within Our Reach* #1 (1991)
- Enemy Ace, "Silent Night," *DC Christmas with the Super-Heroes 2* (1988)
- Deadman, "Should Auld Acquaintance Be Forgot," *DC Christmas with the Super-Heroes 2* (1988)
- "Swingin' Christmas Carol," *Teen Titans* #13 (1968)
- Fantastic Four, "A Christmas Coda," *Marvel Holiday Special* (1991)
- "Noel," *Spawn* #39 (1995)
- *Superman: Peace on Earth* #1 (1998)
- "Charles Dickens' A Christmas

Carol," *Classics Illustrated* #16

Gene Evans
Mayetta, KS 66509

I was saddened to hear of the passing of Batman creator Bob Kane. I'd like to thank Mr. Kane for 59 wonderful years of the world's greatest detective, the 80 Page Giants of the 1960s, and such great memories that I will forever cherish.

Next year will be the 60th anniversary of The Batman, and I think that there should be a postage stamp released in Mr. Kane's memory. How about it, everyone?

Sean Howard
Box 105

Anchor Bay, MI 48004

I am waiting with bated breath for the next Batman movie now that I know Harley Quinn will be in it! I only hope Paul Dini demands and receives script approval and creative control.

To play Harley, I have the perfect performer: wrestling bad girl Tammy Lynn Fytch of Extreme Championship Wrestling (formerly "Sunny" of the WWF)

She is simply perfect. She is sultry and sexy, yet innocent and playful — she has the body and the face — she easily plays a character that you love to hate yet still love anyway with such naturalness, she'll surely be nominated for an acting award. Tammy Lynn Fytch is

the one to take Harley Quinn from pen and ink to flesh and bone, period. I defy anyone to find a better choice for the role.

[It's my guess that, in Hollywood hierarchies, script writers are not quite on the same level as directors. Just a guess, mind you.]

Art Nestor
230 Arthur St.
Zelenople, PA 16063

Having heard that *The Power of Shazam!* is close to cancellation prompts me to write.

It is aggravating not to see the original Captain Marvel's logo gracing the top of each issue. *The Power of Shazam!* is only slightly better than the previous terrible title of *With One Magic Word, Shazam!* Yes, I understand the legal problems involved with Marvel's own captain. But let's take a common-sense look at the situation.

Does anyone really think that the original Captain Marvel logo is going to confuse comics buyers with Marvel's version?

The answer is no. Look at some of the most popular characters published today. Superman, Batman, Spider-Man, and the X-Men each have four regular titles devoted to them and at least one special or mini series or quarterly on sale at any given time. If today's comics buyer can sort out this market overkill,

(Continues on Page 16)

For Art's Sake

By Chris Smighano

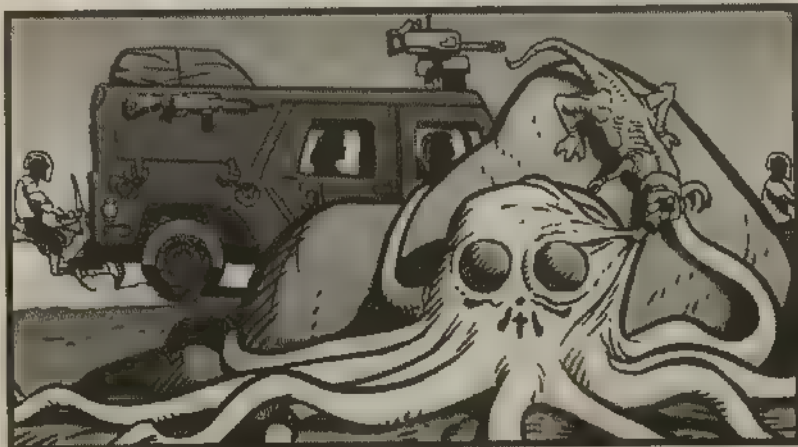


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Oh, So?

From Page 14

then there would certainly be no problem distinguishing between the DC and Marvel versions DC only needs to display (and this is only to make buying childproof) a banner proclaiming "The original" atop each issue.

And what of all the silly crossovers we see today? Yes, there must be money in it or we wouldn't be seeing them. But doesn't that confuse the comics buyer? Gee, I'll bet they could make a buck crossing over both Captain Marvels. But doesn't Marvel have three Captain Marvels all by itself? Which one would Marvel use?

It is time for either DC or Marvel to do the right thing. Marvel should grant DC the right to use the name Captain Marvel as a title logo. Or DC should show the character its rightful respect and pay any reasonable fee to display that logo. Which company has the honor to do the right thing first?

No, a title change alone will not save *Power of Shazam!*

But it will certainly help. Jerry Ordway's beautiful painted covers have probably extended the title's life greatly, but it will take new writers to save *Shazam!*

[The confusion that is being avoided is that of ownership of trademarks — and trademarks' connections with manufacturers. If you were an occasional comics buyer and you saw something with "Marvel" in the title, wouldn't you assume it was connected with Marvel Comics?

And adding more fees to the cost of a publication that's not in the top 10 in sales — when the character's appearance on the cover can appear larger than the title, anyway — is probably not a move a publisher would be eager to explore. "Honor" doesn't really have much to do with any of this, though; it's all a matter of potential commercial benefits of a logo.]

Clint Brady
P.O. Box 169

Issaquah, WA 98027

I read your reply to Aaron Naegele's letter in #1309 and thought I could help you out with one of Naegele's questions.

The first full panel in a comic book appeared in *Captain America Comics* #4, page 8 of the "Captain America and Ivan the Terrible" story, 1941 (or '42; I recently sold my copy and have forgotten the exact publication date).

Keep up the great work!

[Thanks — and you, too! We do count on readers to pitch in when the editorial resources fall short.

Speaking of that, thanks to Howard Keltner's *Golden Age Comic Books Index* for the information that *Captain America Comics* #4 carried a cover date of June 1941.

By the way, I've heard considerable interest from collectors about the index; since Howard is dead and there's no price or other source in the index itself, I'm troubled about where to steer people looking for a copy. Bob Klein — or anyone else who can help — is there an easy way for people to acquire a copy?

I promise that this time I'll tuck the information inside the copy I find myself constantly

referring to in the office.]

Paul E. Kusnerik
475 Friendship Rd.
Darlington, PA 16115

Some time ago, I asked, "When it first aired, didn't *Mr. Magoo's Christmas Carol* run longer than the hour it does currently?"

My apologies for sending you a question that I could just as easily have answered myself, had I only consulted my copy of *The Complete Directory to Prime Time Network TV Shows 1946-Present* (5th Edition)

The answer, from the *Famous Adventures of Mr. Magoo* entry: "... At Christmastime in 1962 and 1963, NBC aired a feature-length cartoon version of Dickens's 'The [sic] Christmas Carol,' featuring Mr. Magoo as Ebenezer [sic] Scrooge and retitled it 'Mr. Magoo's Christmas Carol' ..."

Wouldn't it be great if whoever owns the show would restore all the footage taken out since those first two airings and start showing it that way again?

After 30-some years, there's a whole new audience out there for it.

[And after multiple advances in providing pre-recorded material for public sale, there's a potential pile of cash to go with it.]

Dennis Yee
418 Camelback Rd
Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

The recent news about DC's business dealings reminds us that, although it produces a product that enables us to indulge in a hobby we love, we mustn't lose sight of the fact that the comics business is just that: a business. True, we readers have, at times, an irrational love of the characters and stories. We tend to treat the world comics create as real. (Why else would there be such a fuss over continuity and the numbering of issues?) A lot of people somehow think that creative endeavors should be above the indignity of making money and that those involved in crafting stories and art should do so solely for art's sake (however that's defined) and not be worried about shareholder value.

DC buying WildStorm is a perfectly legitimate exercise in increasing shareholder value. And Jim Lee's sale of that entity is a smart business move. These entities are not just the custodians of our fantasies, but companies which employ people and pay them salaries with which said employees can live their lives.

It's not clear if the recently announced personnel changes at DC are part of a reorganization (of which DC's purchase of WildStorm may be a part, as well). This happens all the time, as we all well know. Still, I couldn't let the departures from DC of Bob Rozakis and Jerry Ordway go without some comment.

To a large extent, Rozakis helped define the look of DC comics in the '80s. I realize it's a part of normal (normal in this day and age) business dealings, but I still think it's a darn shame that DC's losing him. I wonder how many fans realize his contribution to comics. This multi-talented man is surely one of the most underappreciated persons in comics.

What can one say about Jerry Ordway (besides *Shazam!*)? He has always been one of my favorite creators. From his work as an inker, penciller, and writer, from *All-Star Squadron*

(Continues on Page 18)

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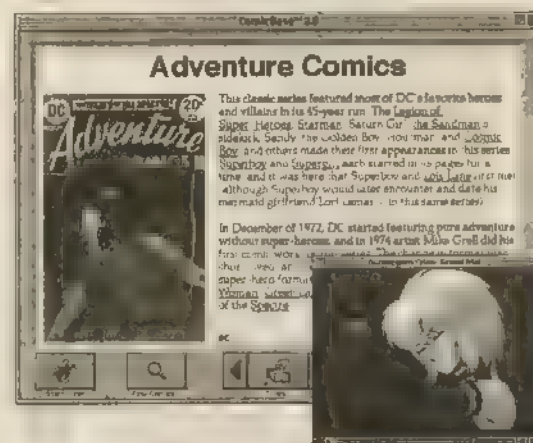


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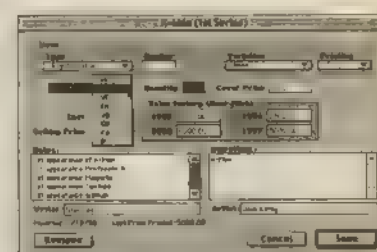


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Tucci is game

Crusade founder Billy Tucci has branched out from his *Shi* and *Tomoe* series to found Battlebooks, Inc., an imprint that publishes a series of gaming comic books. While the series features Marvel characters for the most part, Tucci has also produced an issue featuring *Shi*. What other characters will make an appearance?

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Oh, So?

From
Page
16

and *Infinity Inc.* to *Superman* and the *Power of Shazam!*, this man has demonstrated incredible talent. For me, he defined *Superman* in the '80s and early '90s.

Not only that, he's one of the nicest creators I've ever had the pleasure of meeting. It's hard for an Ordway fan like me to fathom someone telling him, "Your services are no longer needed." DC's loss is Marvel's gain, from the looks of it.

In my particular industry, merger activity has been going on on a regular basis for the past six years. I've seen a lot of good people let go in the name of streamlining and downsizing. Fortunately, almost all the good people always seem to land on their feet and, in fact, do better in their new jobs. I'm sure these two talented people will do well wherever they end up. I intend to show my support for them by voting for their talents with my purchasing dollars. That's business, too.

(Bob and Jerry have always been there to help the researcher and reporter, too, we should note. I still recall Bob patiently running through all DC's formats of the time, describing the differences among all of them as a help in our listing of upcoming projects. Jerry has always been a pleasure to talk with. He's been a pleasure to be around, not even taking into consideration his incredible skills as a storyteller in pictures and art.)

Robert Moraes

By this time I've heard many Marvel readers say how much they don't care for the fact that Marvel has restarted almost all of its long-running comic-book titles with issue #1. Many said they see it as an effort to break away from the past, of ignoring the continuity that began with creators like Stan Lee and Jack Kirby, and of jumping ahead into the future without acknowledging the stories done by writers since the 1960s.

We can question the logic behind Marvel's decision to restart its comics, and it still would not change anything.

However, instead of looking at all the negative aspects behind this equation, let's look more on the positive side: Restarting these comics does not change the fact that Marvel has a long and successful publishing history that goes back to 1961, with a few of its characters even dating back to 1941 (when Marvel was called *Timely Comics*).

Since the 1960s, eight Marvel titles (*Amazing Spider-Man*, *Incredible Hulk*, *Fantastic Four*, *Captain America*, *Iron Man*, *Daredevil*, and *Thor*) have continued to be published, attracting huge numbers of readers, and ran for as long as 400 issues without stopping. This shows that these characters have become a part of modern mythology, and it's not likely that they will disappear any time soon.

It is also safe to say that, if anyone at Marvel starts to ignore or not pay attention to the history of the Marvel universe, Stan Lee will make sure that they do. That's how I'm looking forward to the future of Marvel comics and I hope a lot of other Marvel readers try to look at

it this way, too!

Richard M. Brown
2326 Cabot
Detroit, MI 48209

I've got an idea!

With all these reconstructions of DC history, try this one — call it "Crisis on a Kansas Farm!" Pa Kent is a genius at scientific farming. He goes to the secretary of agriculture warning that his studies show the wheat crop is poisoned by radioactivity. He gets laughed at. He builds an experimental rocket with weathervane attached.

Baby Clark travels to Krypton, where he is adopted by mild-mannered botany experts Jor-El and Lara. Clark's overcoming of Krypton's heavier gravity and study of plants gives him super-strength and the power to make trees grow or diminish. Jor-El and Lara adopt Clark as their own, call him "Clark-El," and protect his identity from girlfriends "Lara-El" and "Lois-El."

So do you think "Crisis in Kansas" would work?

Tony Kolodziej
7719 Farrell Dr.
Amarillo, TX 79121

I've been reading, collecting, and enjoying comics, comic strips, and books for well over 40 years. In fact, I seem to have an addiction to the printed word in all its many forms. I totally agree with Frank Campbell's letter in *CBG* #1270. However, I would like to add one point further: If you place an advertisement in *CBG* and receive a response by letter, phone, or e-mail, please do that person the courtesy of responding, even if in the negative! Do to other folks what you would like done to you, if the situation were reversed. I'm afraid that this will probably fall on deaf ears. I've noticed an increasing lack of similar courtesy in the scientific community over the years — with the excuse, "I'm too busy."

Over the years I have missed the finish of various comics stories and I would like to ask the readership for information as to whether these storylines ever finished.

In 1976, I enjoyed *Marvel Preview* #9, which adapted the first half of Philip Wylie's novel *Gladiator*, published in 1930. *Gladiator* may have been the precursor to *Superman*. Did Marvel ever finish the story, or has another comics publisher ever done this storyline?

In 1985, the last issue of *Epic Illustrated* carried the ninth chapter in John Byrne and Terry Austin's "Last Galactus Story." Has this story ever been finished or will it be? I have hopes that it will. After all, Phil Farmer finally finished his *World of Tiers* SF series after nearly 20 years.

In 1990, I was enjoying the series *Code XIII* by Vance and Van Hamme, published and translated by Catalan Communications. I know from the authors' web page that the story was finished in French. But has there been an English translation of Book 4 on of this excellent adventure-mystery?

[Gladiator was definitely a precursor to Superman; in fact, Siegel and Shuster got permission from Wylie because of the link. They saw the long-term potential of the optimistic portrayal of a super-character whose treatment by Wylie

(Continues on Page 20)



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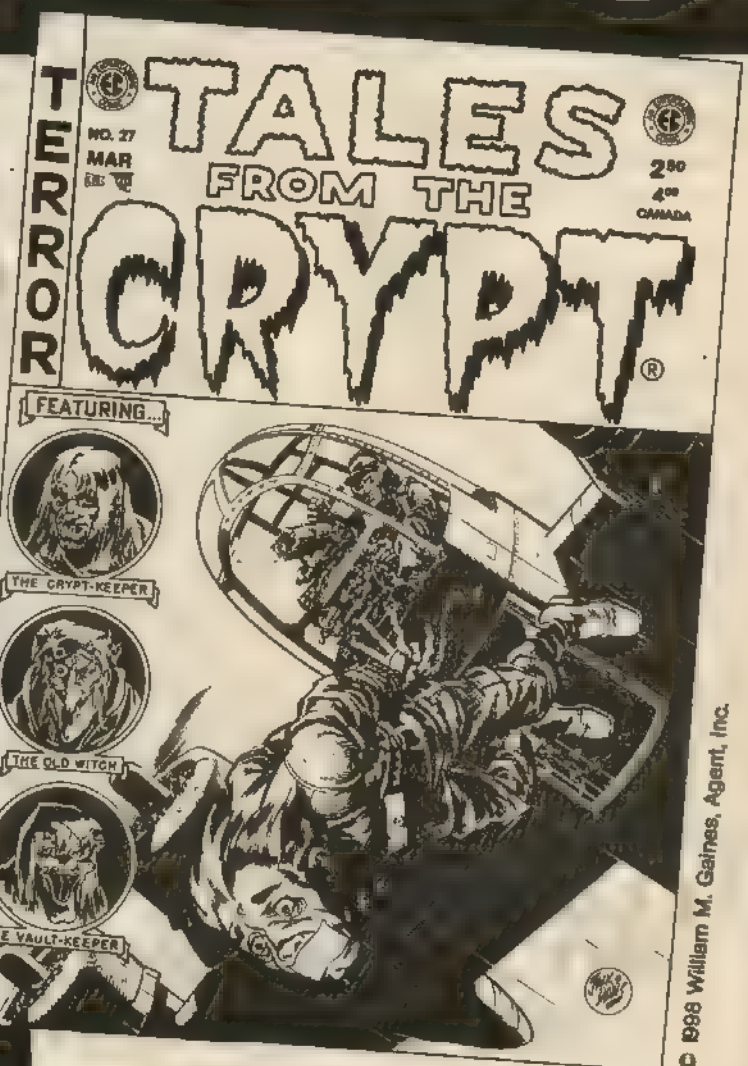


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was pessimistic. I have the feeling that Don and I did an article on *Gladiator* for Marvel at the time — maybe in that issue of *Preview*. I don't think the story was finished — but I can't locate my copies at this point.

My guess is that "Last Galactus Story" and *Code XIII* haven't been completed for fans here — but it's a guess. Anyone?

Chris Jurich
1808 Chestnut St.
Berkeley, CA 94702

There are some powerful arguments for retailers to not give discounts to their customers. Some of the most obvious ones are: 1) It cuts into profit margins in an industry where margins can be precarious, and 2) Discounting creates expectations on the part of customers which foments an atmosphere of lessened value ascribed to the comics themselves. There could be other reasons, but those two on their own make some sense, don't you think?

I've written before that, in today's economy, people have come to ask and, sometimes, expect a discount, because that's the nature of the world of commerce. Any savvy comics retailer is going to have to deal with this question of discounting to some degree to stay in business, because there's no united front of retailers effectively (key word here) curtailing this practice.

Members of Bay Area Comics Retailers

(BACR), I'm told, have in the past long been staunch proponents of "no discounting," but I'm unsure if said policy is still supported or ever was, not to mention even having actually been "said," since this sort of policy (hardly enforceable) could easily be construed as customer-unfriendly. Conversations with experienced retailers in the San Francisco Bay Area have also revealed their dismay when they discovered that I've had access in the bargain bins to comics racked within the past four months or so. If a comic book is sold off the stands in July, it shouldn't be available in the bargain bins by mid-November.

Arguments state that it diminishes the value of the comic book in the eyes of the customer, could deter newsstand sales, and could even diminish the enjoyment of the comic book for the customer.

While these speculations have a ring of truth, I can vouch that, as a consumer, a lot of my comics reading now comes, albeit in a haphazard fashion, from bargain bins. Again, as a consumer, it's a straightforward godsend to get comics like DC's recent second *Tangent* titles go-round for a 25¢ apiece, instead of \$1.99. Moreso, getting several of the DC 1,000,000 titles at five for a quarter. (True!) Some recent purchases at 25¢ apiece have included *Marvel Universe* #5-7, *Nobody* #1 from Oni Press, *Oni Double Feature* #9, *Automaton* #1 from Image, and a few recent 1998 *Legion* titles.

Does this form of purchase diminish my "new" buys each week? No, not really, since the current prices being asked don't equal the entertainment value I demand. I suspect that what those retailers have said is true: that dis-

counted comics have lessened somehow the actual value of the comic books in my mind. Call it lowered expectations, perhaps, but I don't often get around to reading many of the discounted comics I buy for days — or, perhaps, weeks. Comics I buy fresh off the stands? They're probably read much more quickly. But the comics I buy from the racks are those I really can't wait to read or am unwilling to risk trusting to find in the bins.

Discounting and comics. Used sagely by retailers, it can be a benefit to proven loyal customers and to improving the bottom line with increased sales. Does discounting create a perception of lessened value for all concerned? Some retailers feel that even selling for 25¢ a comic book bought at about \$1, if it didn't sell right off the shelf the first week, is one's best bet. Otherwise, that title will just languish at its slightly inflated price in the bins — perhaps never to be sold at all. If a retailer has a lot of backstock that is just gathering dust in a warehouse or on shelves away from the public, what good are the back issues to anyone? Getting cash flow, even if only a 25¢ and representing a loss of 75¢ off wholesale purchase price, is better than no 25¢ at all.

As retailers think more and more about just surviving, new sales and merchandising techniques, as well as selling strategies, will need to be implemented in order to enter the 21st century as a successful retailer.

Will you be in business five years from now? How will you get there? What do you need to do in order to thrive five years from now?

[As you note in passing, every \$1.99 comic book a casual shopper gets from a 25¢ bargain bin represents a retailer loss of 75¢ in cash alone (not including time, shipping, and bookkeeping cost of putting the item on sale in the first place). The 25¢ bargain bin is part of what led countless comics shops to "order conservatively": that is, it is what led countless shops to order almost no copies beyond those advance-ordered by their subscription customers.

As to discounting improving the bottom line by increased sales, Brian Hibbs prepared a chart in *Comics Retailer* #72 demonstrating some of the motivation for restraining discounts. To make the same profit, a retailer would have to sell 19 copies of a single issue at no discount, 23 at 10% discount, 26 at 15% discount, 29 at 20% discount, 34 at 25% discount, and 42 at 30% discount. Increased volume would have to be incredibly increased to make a profit at generous discounts. And, again, this doesn't take into account maintaining a 25¢ box.]

Tina Young

For what it's worth, I agree that Batgirl should be erased from the Batman mythos. In fact, I think it goes deeper than that to what Paul Amanzyk commented: "There are too many super-heroes running around in the Batman titles" (*CBG* #1303). In that same issue Peter David commented on the "rebooting" of Spider-Man. I believe that The Batman is the character that is in most desperate need of a "rebooting."

Hell, there needs to be another "DC Implosion" just on all the various Batman titles. Ironically, when DC did *Year One* by Frank Miller, as sort of a mini, non-official reinventing of Batman, the character really didn't need it. All the garbage was aligned to the Earth-2 version of the character and, with *Crisis*, thus eliminated.

The Earth-1 version was already streamlined and efficient. It wasn't until later that it grew out of control into a wicked corporate profit machine with an unreasonable number of spin-off titles, related characters, and mini-series. At the current cover price of \$1.99 per copy, it takes the Wayne fortune for a fan to collect all Batman comics on sale every month. To add insult to injury, a lot of the stories and art really haven't been that good over the past decade.

What I, if not the majority of Bat-fans, would love to see DC do is let O'Neil & Co. go wild with next year's mega-bat-crossover, "No Man's Land," as their finale and farewell to Batman. After that, hand the series over to, perhaps Steve Englehart — possibly Frank Miller — maybe Gerry Conway — Len Wein — Jim Lee — maybe John Byrne, himself.

End all Batman-related titles, from *Azrael* through to the latest spin-off, *Birds of Prey*, and slash the number of mini-series and one-shots drastically, to end up with the only Bat-titles being *Batman*, *Detective Comics*, *Legends of The Dark Knight*, and *Robin*. Reboot *Batman*. Eliminate all the garbage from the past 15 years: Barbara Gordon-Batgirl-Oracle, Jason Todd, Tim Drake, Nightwing, *Azrael*, *Huntress*, etc. Get back to the basics: The Batman, Bruce Wayne — tormented vigilante (sans yellow oval on costume) seeking revenge for his parents' murder. Dick Grayson, his rebellious circus gypsy 16-year-old ward and daredevil partner Robin. Alfred, their sardonic servant who raised Bruce. Jim Gordon, gruff commissioner who doesn't know what to think of the masked vigilantes. Harvey Dent, crusading district attorney and Bruce's best friend. Imagine the thrill of not knowing when or if he will be transformed into Two-Face. Selina Kyle, love interest and, as Catwoman, adversary. A streamlined rogues' gallery, headed up by insane mass murderer The Joker, powerful mob chieftain Oswald "The Penguin" Cobblepot, and Eddie Nygma, crooked sideshow hustler who worked with Dick and his family who now, as The Riddler, has become a terrifying stalker obsessed with finding "the answers."

Ah — it could be so good. But I doubt it'll ever happen.

[It may well be that there will be an eventual restart, but any such effort would have to distinguish between baby and bathwater. One fan's favorite is another's turn-off. And a restart is, some comics stores are finding, the signal for long-time, habitual buyers to remove items from a "must-buy" shopping list. In fact, working their way through the 87th revisiting of this or that origin story could pretty much deaden the interest of many long-time fans.

I, for example, find nothing intrinsically a "must" about *The Penguin*; his potential is pretty limited. Oracle (though not necessarily in the person of Barbara Gordon) has a lot more plot possibilities. Grayson wasn't particularly rebellious in *Golden* or *Silver* Ages, so you're not really talking about one of the "basics" here.

It seems to me that you're asking for characters and set-ups that you find personally appealing (picking from an assortment of versions) — and there's nothing wrong with that. But I suspect that the identical considerations were what drove DC's editorial team to create the very stories you object to. If it helps any, I think you've pretty much got the set-up you ask for — in the guise of the sparkling *Adventures* TV episodes.]

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Now Appearing

(Editor's Note: Send items for this feature to **Now Appearing**, c/o **Comics Buyer's Guide**, 700 E. State St., Iola, Wis. 54990 or fax it (again) c/o **CBG** to (715) 445-4087.

A special note: **Neil Gaiman** has scheduled a number of appearances throughout January and February. Please see Page 8.]

January 9

Mike Zeck (artist on *The Kingdom* #2), **Bob Smith** (inker on *Archie*, *Robin* and *Catwoman*), **Mike Decarlo** (inker on *AnimaMiacs*, *Pinky & the Brain*, and *Thor*), **Brian Wood** (creator of *Channel Zero*), and **Kieran Howarth** (creator of *Dream Station*) at Clockwork Comics, 512 Boston Post Rd., Orange, Connecticut 06477, from 5 to 8 p.m.

January 16

LiaAnne "Destiny" DeVaul (cover girl for *London Night Studios* and nude model) at The Store, 4230 Pontiac Lake Rd., Waterford, Michigan 48328 from 1 to 4 p.m.

January 27

Matt Hawkins (creator of *Lady Pendragon*) at David's Comic Book Store, 25422 Trabuco Rd., Lake Forest, California from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

January 30

Christopher Moeller (creator/artist of *Sheva's War*, artist of *Star Wars*) at New Dimension Comics, 20550 Rt. 19, Cranberry Township, Pennsylvania 16066. For times, call (724) 776-0433.

— **Kent Brockman**, *Simpsons Comics* #39

I am less than 48 hours away from another birthday, as I write this week's column — I'll be 47, you rude person — and still loving my comic books. It's a relationship that definitely has its highs and lows, the latter being dominant following a week which saw Gladstone Comics and Kitchen Sink Press — two of our classiest publishers — leave the building.

Yet there remains something so compelling about the comics art form that, perhaps against all common sense, I cannot and will not turn my back on it.

How can I? It's such a splendid medium in which to entertain readers and express ideas. Its applications are limitless and its potential equally so. The comics industry is a kingdom waiting to provide undreamed-of heights and influence, if we could but find the keys to unlock its gates and let the people enter. Maybe we left them in our other suit.

☛ **Comicology: The Kingdom Come Companion** (Harbor Press, \$16.95) is cover-touted as "volume one of the magazine that belongs on your bookshelf." I'm not going to disagree with that assessment, since, at a weighty 272 pages, it certainly feels like a for-real book to me. If I were inclined to look at all askance at Editor-Publisher Brian Saner-Lamken's tome, it would be because it's 80 pages longer than the story it discusses. Not, as I once heard somewhere, that there's anything wrong with that.

Kingdom Come, which I was inspired to re-read by the arrival of a preview copy of *Comicology*, was, first and foremost, one heck

"This is definitely a 'laugh-so-that-you-might-not-weep' story."

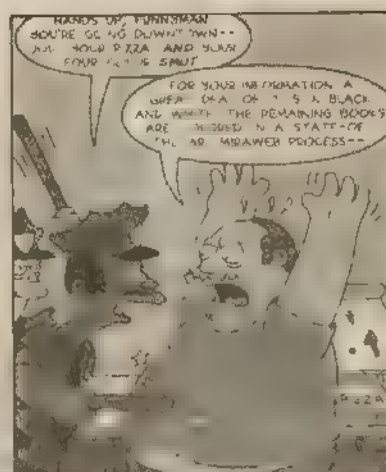
of a great story. It was one of the most deliberately executed and serious-minded super-hero stories of all time, ranking with *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns*, *Daredevil: Born Again*, *Marvels*, and, of course, *Watchmen*. But, along with the serious intent, writer Mark Waid and artist-originator Alex Ross also created a work with the ability to amuse and engage comic-book fans long past the actual reading of the tale. There are dozens of characters, most of whom are never named and never speak a line of dialogue, who have their own fascinating and largely-unrevealed histories. There are dozens of visual nods to characters and objects from the vast history of DC Comics. It's these enigmatic tidbits that continue to delight the readers of *Kingdom Come* to this day, and it's this fan gestalt that *Comicology* address so entertainingly.

Comicology's eye-catching cover is a full-color rendition of key *Kingdom Come* characters, but drawn by Alex Ross in the style of the *Super Friends* from the animated series of the same name. It's a delightful homage to the legendary Alex Toth, who did design work for the show.

(A quick show of hands. How many of you would love to see a meeting between Scooby Doo and The Spectre?)

Past the cover, *Comicology* offers: articles on the origins and future of *Kingdom Come* and its creators; a simply amazing annotated guide to the story; sidebars on other DC events and on the original proposal that became *Kingdom Come*; a sketchbook featuring more than 150 previously unpublished pieces by Alex Ross; a "20 questions" piece featuring Ross and Waid responding to lingering posers about the story; a complete *Kingdom Come* character index; and interviews with both Waid and Ross. That's a lot of stuff for 17 bucks and earns *Comicology* my highest recommendation.

In fact, I've got a further suggestion for you. You've been working hard. You deserve a reward. You should set a day aside to re-read *Kingdom Come*, preferably in the DC Comics/Graphitti Designs slip-covered edition if you have it, while also reading the annotations from *Comicology*. It's a wonderful way to revisit a true comics classic.



☛ "Comic Book Legal Defense Fun" is what the cover of *Simpsons Comics* #39 (Bongo, \$2.25) promises, and that's what writer Scott M. Gimple delivers in "Sense and Censorability." A fact-finding visit to the "adults only" section of Springfield's comic-book shop, The Android's Dungeon, lands Homer and the shop's owner in jail. The situation quickly becomes desperate. In the words of police chief Wiggum:

"Simpson! You're looking at 180 years here, easy! Purchasing obscene material! Transporting obscene material! Publicly reading obscene material! Bagging and boarding obscene material in the hopes that it will go up in value!"

This is definitely a "laugh-so-that-you-might-not-weep" story, as the censorious forces of Springfield put the hapless Homer — and the comics-shop owner — on trial in a courtroom drama that would give Perry Mason the shakes. I laughed, I cried, I started figuring out whether I could squeeze a donation for the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund out of my anorexic checkbook.

Other reasons to buy *Simpson Comics* #39 would include mirthful artwork by Phil Ortiz and Tim Bavington, an editorial-page plug for the CBLDF, and, on the flip side, a parody of a famous Silver Age cover — and the conclusion to "The Heroic Life and Mortifying Death of Radioactive Man" by Bill and Kayre Morrison.

That adds up to 30 pages of comics and features, making *Simpson Comics* one of the best buys in comicdom. Don't miss this issue.

☛ Also recommended: **Bart Simpson's Treehouse of Hor-**

ror #4 (\$2.50). See Lisa Simpson as Earth's only hope in the Jack Kirby-esque "I Faced Tahn-Enn-Bahm, the Christmas Tree from Another World" by Chuck Dixon, Ortiz, and Bavington. Gasp in disbelief at the double-page spread by Geof Darrow, an incredible panoramic scene that would have Waldo feeling crowded. Revel in horror nostalgia, as Batton Lash, Julius Priete, and Bavington take you to the Bradbury Carnival for a visit with "The Illustrative Man." Buy this comic book and do your part to keep that Halloween spirit alive all year long.

☛ In that spirit, let me also direct you to Mike Manley's **Giant-Size Action Planet Halloween Special** (\$5.95). This tabloid issue features eight complete stories by some of the top talents in the comics field: "Monsterman" by Manley, "Brannigan's Ghost" by Bret Blevins, "Little Stiffy" by Bill Wray, "Wrathbone & Bitchula" by John Heebink, "Doc Thunder" by Jason Armstrong, "The Wretch" by Phil Hester, "Hem & Haw" by Scott Cohn, and "Uncle Slam & Fire Dog" by Ande Parks.

It's a big, brassy issue that had me laughing out loud. Unfortunately, since some of the strips aren't suitable for younger readers, I can only recommend this special to the "13 and older" crowd. Which I do.

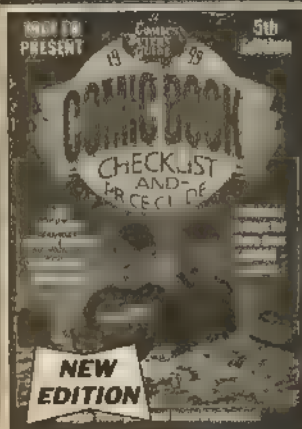
Thought for the future: I'd love to see Manley and company do another comic book of this type with an eye to getting it into mainstream bookstores. I think it would be a big hit with the kids who so love the "Goosebumps" books.

☛ One last item: I want to pass along the warm thanks of Bill Mantlo's family to all who sent cards and good wishes to him.

In a matter of days after **CBG** ran the update on Mantlo's condition and distributed it to various online message boards and newsgroup, the family had already received dozens of cards. You guys and gals are the absolute best. Thank you so much.

Please send your comments on and review items for this column to: **Tony's Tips**, P.O. Box 1502, Medina, OH 44258. You can e-mail Tony at: tonyisa@ohio.net.

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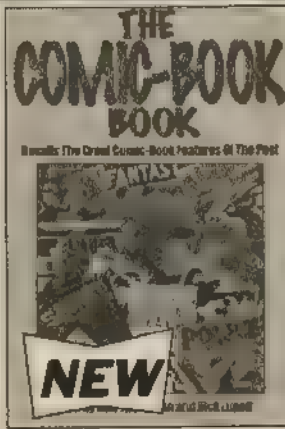
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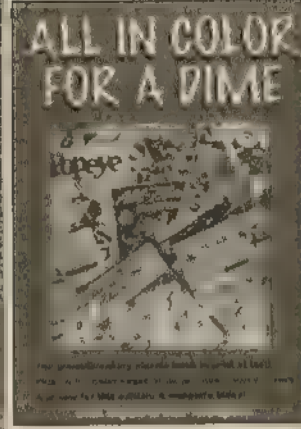
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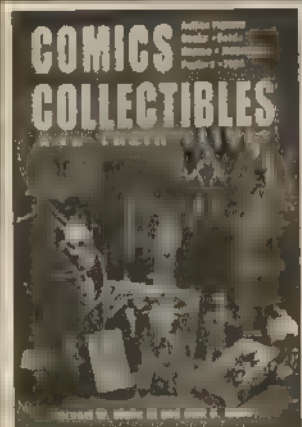
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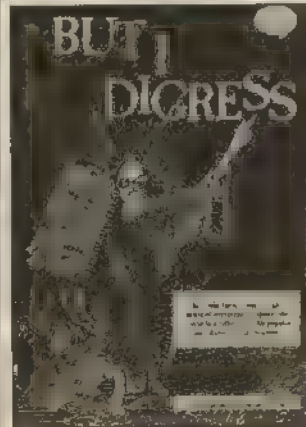


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Faraway LOOKS

a sideways glance at the world of comics
by JOHN JAMISON MILLER
and illustrated by the intrepid MEREDITH



By the numbers

41 The number of panels in Rob Liefeld's *Captain America* Vol. 2 #6 (Apr 97). That's 1.78 panels per page, or a nickel a panel

9th The issue's ranking both in sales to retailers and to consumers that month.

Sources include Comics Retailer and Diamond Comic Distributors.

No-no #9. To be surely marked as an outsider entering publishing, announce your print run before you solicit your title, as some still do. On seeing such promises for huge print runs, one wonders where the publisher will park his car while the garage is full

Hostess History Moment

Abuse in armed services investigated



One of a number of such investigations early in the post-Vietnam era, General Rockjaw's 1977 inquiry turned up significant cases of abuse by superior officers. However, it is generally agreed that Rockjaw's unorthodox suggested remedy, fruit pies for the enlisted men, later contributed to his failure to be approved as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs by a Congress unresponsive to tender crust and real fruit filling.

comics
newsline



AC offers a Pure Gold Super Hero Pack in January, combining *Golden Age Greats* Vol. 3 and 4 for \$19.95. Stories feature Black Terror, Fighting Yank, Bulletman, and more

"Fred," the call began, "we'd like to kill you. Or let the readers try, anyway."

"Hanh?" It might have sounded to him like the kind of idea that could only be generated by fanboys and -girls gathered over adult beverages. If so, he was right.

In recent years, the *CBG* staff has planned issues ever further in advance — and has called on the obsessions of its burgeoning freelance pool to help. At our annual San Diego Con Freelancers Freeload in August, we brainstormed topics for issues straight through January — including the issue you're holding now. When I challenged Scott Brick to devise a sequel to his emotional inquest into the demise of Gwen Stacy, he noted the 10th anniversary of the Robin II phone poll. When someone (I can't remember who) wondered what Fred Hembeck could do with such an unabashed publicity stunt, laughter erupted from the group, followed by rapid-fire ideas — and the result was last week's issue, the phone-in contest, and a potential *Dateline* story arc.

Upshot: If there's something you've always wanted to see in *CBG*, hit us with it before and at conventions. If we're not too tired to communicate (forget about Sundays), you never know what'll develop

At a comics shop near you...

A close look at approximately 5% of DC's monthly output

What's DC got on the shelves? There's not enough ink in Wisconsin to review any given month's DC entire output, so here are some notables.

Mad About the Movies DC
\$14.95, b/w, 256 page book, 1998

Oh, cool! A big volume of *Mad* movie parodies, and it really is "cheap!"

What's this? "Special Warner Bros 75th Anniversary Edition." It's all Warner movies in here. Gee, they sure own a lot. That's nice of them, though. Wonder what they'll do for Universal's next anniversary. Or maybe a volume for those great Disney pictures. No?

What? Cynical about *Mad*?

It's OK. You're not alone. We've all been adjusting to it in varying degrees, as corporate culture absorbs the counterculture — and if the tightening embrace of Time Warner over an anti-establishment icon of old creeps us out, well, we're just not being very sophisticated, are we?

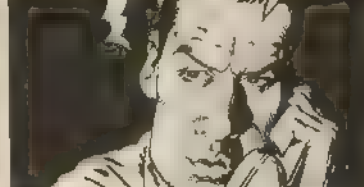
PRO: First-rate material. **CON:** Dad's protest song feeling, though, is Junior's cola jingle. The bad vibes Gate-check all illusions, started for some of us nearly a decade ago, when *Mad* hit the stands with its *Batman* parody hard upon the film's release. The parody itself, reprinted in this volume, sent up scenes cut from the original script. (Instead of reciting a silly poem in the third reel, The Joker kidnaps Vicki Vale, forcing Batman to race after them on horseback, cutting through traffic pile-ups caused by Joker-sedated cops. Tim Burton cut the scene, citing that the costume looked wretched in daylight. It's in the script, in the novelization, and in the *Mad* parody — but not in the film.) We understand that getting slipped scripts and stills in advance is how these parodies get done on time, but, to the aged, it seems a sacrilegious coming-of *Mad* and State

Ah, it's a different world — or the same world, with more efficient marketing. Parody is publicity, too, after all, and, if *Time* can put tornadoes on its cover to push a Warner film, repackaging some of the best stuff — which this is — from the Usual Gang of Idiots isn't so bad. Probably less chance of getting sued this way, too. Sigh. Accelerated decrepitude...

While Roger Stern's writing has always been a personal favorite, this Elseworlds tale isn't much of an assignment: perfunctory in all respects, as far too much of the historical Elseworlds fare has been — shedding little new light on the period or the character for the reader.

Neuman! The Jerker just kidnapped Icky from her apartment! How long will it take you to bring my Betty costume to the alley near 10 Street and Lois Lane?

That's too long! Tell you what, put my costume in a Domino's Pizza box and have them deliver it. They'll get it here in 15 minutes.



Superman: A Nation Divided DC
\$4.95, color, 48 pp., Dec 98

Clark Kent was born into the Union, so count on 38 pages of a strange visitor from another world walking through *The Red Badge of Courage*. That no attention is paid to the Southern point of view (and, yeah, there was one — or, rather, several) in all this isn't too surprising, given the market concerns, but it might've made for a richer story. A second note arrives in the end, but it's a little too late at these prices.

PRO: Barreto's art is detailed and well done. **CON:** Stock Elseworlds tale can be summarized in one sentence.

OVERALL: C-

Coming soon: Accountant Clark Kent averts the Great Depression?

Well meaning, but hardly subtle — one more for the new edition of the *Encyclopedia Supermanica*.

Answers to last week's FAMOUS LAST WORDS #1: 1. Maus II 2. Secret Wars 3. Crisis on Infinite Earths 4. Kingdom Come (and, yeah, we just caught that the line is "Grace" and not "Peace"); the TPB line is "Let's go home and dream about the future."

5. Cerebus: Minds 6. Batman: The Dark Knight Returns 7. Watchmen

The *Adventures of Edgar Mudd and Elaine*, the first release from *Wet Earth*, is slated for March. Self-publisher Howard Busch's color adventure series about an underpaid and overworked accountant-turned-super-hero is priced at \$3.50



John Drury, with apologies to Claude Rains



John Drury, with apologies to Claude Rains

FANTAGRAPHICS Adastr, the "Young Gods" character from Barry Windsor-Smith's *Storyteller* series, returns in a Fantagraphics graphic novel this April

Schizofannia?

"Lately, quite a few customers seem to be saying one thing but doing another," John Tinkness, owner of Another Dimension in Calgary, Alberta told us in October. "Despite frequent complaints about mega-crossovers and special covers, our best-selling issues in recent weeks have been *DC One Million* and the Chromium covers of *X-Men*."

short-lived 1992 ABC series with Target creator Len Wein years ago, we agreed that, had the series come along later, slightly modified, it might have found a home on NBC's Thrillology Saturday line-up.)

PRO: Genuine suspense. **CON:** Over-the-top advance copy, this imagery limits appeal. **OVERALL:** B+ taut action and an engaging psychological study of a mimic who no longer works for pay, but for sport — only doubling for people he finds interesting. That's a good plan, since the issues where he's doubling for boring people probably wouldn't sell

Ah, the Vertigo treatment. That means the fourth line in a revival of an old hero can be "I am a severed penis stuffed into a dying mouth." Classy.

And elsewhere...

Wild Person in the Woods G.T. Laps
\$2.50, b/w, 24 pages, Dec 98

Not many comics about orangutans these days — but, when there is, you can count on the Intrepid Meredith, Tarzan fanatic and primate studies graduate that she is, to find it. (Seriously. If I can avoid having any of our children named after Dian Fossey, it will be a true feat.)

PRO: Thoughtful; good! **CON:** Too dry for most. **OVERALL:** B the voice of "education" science comics since his two fine *Two-Fisted Science* issues. In *Wild Person in the Woods*, Ottaviani and Anne Timmons adapt some of the experiences described by field zoologist and *Reflections of Eden* author Birutė Galdikas and arrange a sort of comics diary based on her closest encounters with wild orangutans.

While this heavily annotated issue succeeds in educating, the disjoint nature here is less entertaining than Ottaviani's previous, anecdote-based efforts

Human Target #1 DC (Vertigo)
\$2.95, color, 32 pages, ships Feb 10

Moving on to titles coming soon, Peter Milligan and Edvin Brukovic give the Vertigo treatment to The Human Target, probably best known as the most obscure DC hero to get the Hollywood treatment. (Discussing the

LOC AND LOAD #1

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- 141 Mighty Samson (Gold Key) 5, 8, 10, 11, 13, 15-25, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 35, 36, 38, 40, 41, 42, 43, 45, 46, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 43

SUN, JAN 10

Friz Freleng Frame by Frame at the Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles, Calif. See Calendar Notes

Toronto Comics II in Ontario, Canada. Final day. See Calendar Notes

Born on this date:
Ernest Edwards (1967)

MON, JAN 11

Born on this date:
Brad Joyce
Terry Beatty (1958)
Bob Harris (1959) 40 years ago
Miyako Matsuda Graham (1960)
Sam Kierh (1963)
Trevor Tamin (1968)

TUES, JAN 12

CBG #1315 ships — sharpen your stakes for CBG's investigation of Buffy: The Vampire Slayer — The Origin from Dark Horse. Plus a preview of the Alternative Press Expo

Born on this date:
Cary Coatsney
Joe Quesada (1962)
Franchesco (1965)
John Miller (1968)

WED, JAN 13

Born on this date:
Ron Goulart (1933)
Jerry Acerno (1961)
Anna Bennett (1965)

THURS, JAN 14

Animated Culture at the Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles, Calif. See Calendar Notes

Born on this date:
Rudy D. Nebres
John Tartagione (1921)
Steven J. Woron (1958)

FRI, JAN 15

Born on this date:
Stan Kay
Norman Felchle (1964) 35 years ago

SAT, JAN 16

Born on this date:
Jim Berry (1932)
Randy H. Crawford (1953)
Steve Erwin (1960)
Christopher Richard Schenck (1963)
David M. DeVries (1966)

Publishers

To see your comics listed here, please supply the exact shipping date for each title as soon as possible, preferably at least one month ahead of time. Send the information to: Maggie Thompson, CBG Calendar, 700 E. State St., Iola, WI 54990. The same goes for any other announcements, additions, and corrections.

CBG Calendar Notes

Shows listed are multiple-day, non-mall-show events with the primary focus on comic books. Further information about these and other shows, as well as creator appearances, can be found each week in the CBG features What, Where, and When and Now Appearing.

• **Animated Culture**, Jan. 14, 7:30 p.m. at the Skirball Cultural Center, 2701 N. Sepulveda Blvd., Los Angeles, CA. Betty Boop, Private Snafu, Bugs Bunny, Felix the Cat, and more. Part of the center's series of lectures and films exploring the cultural expression and social commentary of cartoons. Tickets: (323) 660-8587. Info: (310) 440-4500.

• **Friz Freleng Frame by Frame**, Jan. 10, 3 p.m. at the Skirball Cultural Center, 2701 N. Sepulveda Blvd., Los Angeles, CA. Part of the center's series of lectures and films exploring the cultural expression and social commentary of cartoons. Tickets: (323) 660-8587. Info: (310) 440-4500.

Angeles, CA. Part of the center's series of lectures and films exploring the cultural expression and social commentary of cartoons. Tickets: (323) 660-8587. Info: (310) 440-4500.

• **Toronto Comics II**, Jan. 9 and 10. Weston Harbour Castle Hotel, 1 Harbour Square (corner of Bay St. and Queen's Quay), Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Guests include Ron Garney, Randy Green, Howard Porter, Joe Quesada, and Mike Wieringo. Admission: \$7/day, \$10/both days. Hours: Saturday 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sunday 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Info: (416) 761 1760.

Continuing This Week

• **Cartoon Art Museum**, 814 Mission St., San Francisco, CA. Call for updates on current exhibits: (415) CAR-TOON.

• **International Museum of Cartoon Art**, 201 Plaza Real Boca Raton, FL 33432. Call for updates on current exhibits: (561) 391-2200. Current exhibit: A Holiday Cartoon Celebration, through Jan. 17. Holiday-themed cartoons

and comics, including works by Carl Barks, Milton Caniff, Will Eisner, Chuck Jones, Walt Kelly, Thomas Nast, and Mori Walker.

• **Words & Pictures Museum**, 140 Main St., Northampton, MA. Call for updates on current exhibits: (413) 586-8545. Current exhibit: Creepy & Eerie with Richard Corben exhibit, through January 1999 at the Words & Pictures Museum; in Northampton, Mass. Curated in collaboration with Heavy Metal magazine, this exhibit features a wide variety of Corben's work, including paintings which mix oils, acrylics, airbrush, and markers. The exhibit is not intended for children. Marvel Knights exhibit of super-hero art by Marvel and Event artists, including Joe Jusko, Jae Lee, Jimmy Palmiotti, Joe Quesada, Mark Texeira, and Bernie Wrightson, through January 1999. The exhibit will showcase work from each of the four Marvel Knights titles: Black Panther, Daredevil, Inhumans, and Punisher, including covers, interior work, and scripts, as well as such Event comics as Ash and Painkiller Jane.

New comics scheduled to ship this week

The following information is taken from publisher and distributor solicitations and updates and is as accurate as possible at press time. Check with your local retailer to find out what day new comics go on the shelves. Comics that are delayed or rescheduled will be tracked in future CBG Calendars. Note: indicates a rescheduled comic book that appeared in a previous CBG Calendar.

Archie Comics

Archie's Double Digest #106, \$2.95
Betty #71, \$1.75
Sonic Super Special #8, \$2.25

Cartoon Books

• Bone #35, \$2.95 (Nov)

Chaos Comics

Chastity Rocked #4 (of 4), \$2.95
Underhater Preview (two covers), \$2.50

Dark Horse

Buffy the Vampire Slayer: The Origin #1 (of 3)

(two covers), \$2.95
Dark Horse Presents #139, \$2.95
Masakazu Katsura's Shadow Lady I: Dangerous Love #4 (of 7), \$2.50
Star Wars: Crimson Empire II #3 (of 6), \$2.95

DC Comics

Animaniacs Featuring Pinky and The Brain #46, \$1.99
Azrael: Agent of the Bat #50, \$2.25
Batman: Shadow of the Bat #83, \$1.99
Birds of Prey TPB, \$17.95
Books of Magic #58, \$2.50
Crimson #8, \$2.50
Future Cop LAPD: Official Comic Book Magazine, \$4.95
Gen II Annual '99, \$3.50
Green Lantern #110, \$1.99
Impulse #46, \$2.25
Legends of the DC Universe #14, \$3.95
Legionnaires #69, \$2.50

Min. #6, \$2.50
Nightwing #29, \$1.99
Resurrection Man #22, \$2.50
Scooby-Doo #20, \$1.99
Superman & Batman: Generations #3 (of 4), \$4.95

Superman of America #1, \$3.95 (spec. ed. \$4.95)
• Superman: Sunday Classics HC w/slipcase, \$60 (Nov 22-28)
Titans #1, \$2.50
Transmetropolitan #19, \$2.50

Gemstone Publishing

Frontline Combat Annual #3, \$13.50
Fanc #9, \$2.50
Tales from the Crypt #27, \$2.50
Valor Annual #1, \$13.50

Jaco Comics

Goop #3, \$1.99 (Dec)

Marvel Comics

Alpha Flight #20, \$1.99
Amazing Spider-Man #3, \$1.99
Avengers Forever #4 (of 12), \$2.99
Black Panther #5, \$2.50
Generation X #49, \$1.99
Iron Man #14, \$1.99
Mutant X #6, \$1.99
Spider-Girl #6, \$1.99
Spider-Man: The Manga #28, \$2.99

Oni Press

Nobody #3 (of 4), \$2.95

Viz Communications

Dragonball #11 (of 12), \$2.95
Nightwarrors: Darkstalkers: Revenge #3 (of 6), \$2.95

Pulp Vol. 3 #2, \$5.95

Ranma 1/2 Vol. 12 TPB, \$15.95

Warp Graphics

Elquest #32, \$2.95

Shipping notes and updates

• **Confirmed shipping.** We have received confirmation that the following titles have shipped and should be available in stores. This reflects shipping information received through Dec. 24.

Black Swan: Bloodthirsty Pirate Tales #7, \$2.95 (Nov)
C.M. La Blui: Girl Collection Vol. 2, \$16.95 (Nov)
Urutsukidori: Legend of the Overfiend #5, \$2.95 (Nov)
Delta: Innates: Prisoners of Society #4 (of 4), \$2.95 (Nov)
Egmont Fleetway: 2000 A.D. #1121, \$2.95 (Nov)
Image: Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles #18, \$2.95 (Jul)
Lady Luck: Fiction: Shades of Grey (w/music CD), \$14.95 (Jul)
Scarlet Rose: Personals '98 #1, #2, \$2.95 (Nov)
Vision: Tail Tails #2, \$2.95 (Aug)

• **Dec. 27-Jan. 2:** The following items have been added to publishers' shipping schedules for this week, in addition to those items listed in previous CBG Calendars.
Abstract: Strangers in Paradise Vol. III #20, \$2.75 (Dec)
American Mule: True Adventures of Adam & Bryon #5, \$2.50 (Nov)
Claypool: Elvira #68, \$2.50 (Dec)

Fireman: Gear #2 (of 6), \$2.95
Image: Ascension #11, \$2.50 (Oct)
Curse of the Spawn #27, \$1.95 (Nov)
Darkminds #6, \$2.50 (Dec)
Mage: The Hero Defined #10, \$2.50 (Jul)
Wildstorm Fine Arts: The Gallery Collection, \$19.95 (Nov 22-28)
Zorro: The Lady Wears Red, \$12.95 (Nov 29-Dec. 5)
Top Shelf: Tales of the Great Unspoken #1, \$3.50 (Jan)

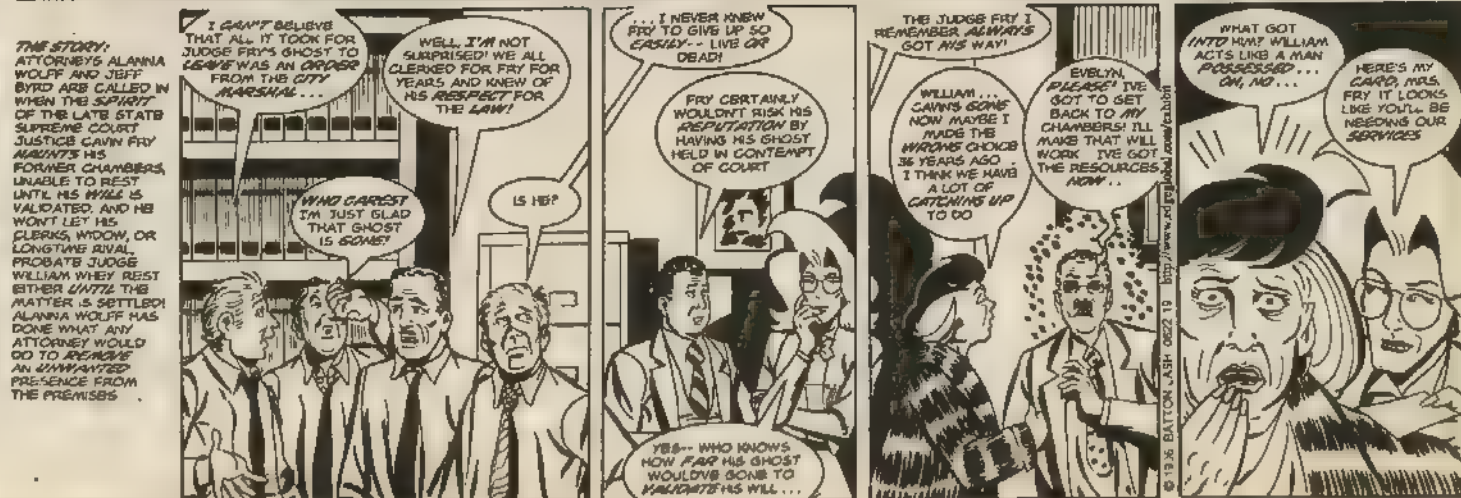
Cancellations

The following items have been announced as canceled or postponed. If a publisher resolicits for any of these items they will be listed again in the CBG Calendar.
Arrow: Arrow Spotlight: Talonback #1 (Oct)
Bench Press: Warner's Way #4-6 (Oct-Dec)
Boneyard: Babylon Crush: The Last Shepherd #1 (Oct)
Chicago Brothers Kick Jerry Springer's Ass (Sep)
Braintstorm: Exotic Storm: Melissa Wolf #1 (Oct)
Caliber: Caliber Core #1, #2 (Aug, Oct)
Legendlore: Slave of Fate (Aug)
Silent Invasion: Abductions #2 (Aug)
Dark Horse: Foot Soldiers TPB (Jun. 14-20)
Davdez: Last Heroes #6 (Oct)

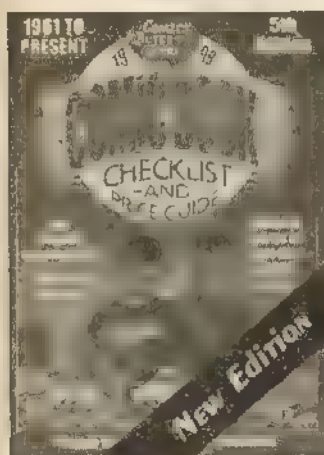
Dollhouse: Shocking Pink: The Teenage #1 (Oct)
Drawn & Quarterly: New York Diary HC (Dec)
Eagle Wing: Madoka #1 (Oct)
Fantagraphics: Luba #4 (Dec)
Ghetosake: Chocolate Thunder Special with Ashcan #1 (Dec)
Head: No Justice, No Piece #3 (Oct)
Image: Altered Image TPB Vol. 1 (Dec)
Danger Girl #6 (Dec), rescheduled for April from DC
Leave it to Chance #12 (Sep), rescheduled for April from DC
Kitchen Sink: Alley Oop Vol. 4 1949 TPB (Oct. 25-31), HC (Dec. 13-19)
Cages Collection TPB (Apr)
Crim: The Author's Ed. HC (Nov 15-21)
LIT Almer Vol. 28 (Dec. 6-12)
Muzzlers, Guzzlers and Good Yeggs (Nov. 8-14)
Spirit: The New Adventures #9 (Dec. 13-19)
Zat! Book Four TPB (Dec. 13-19)
Maelstrom: Demonangel Twilight #1 (Oct)
Millennium: Little Miss Strange #2 (Oct)
Realm: Battletar Galactica: Search for Sanctuary #2, #3 (Oct, Dec)
Battletar Galactica: 20 Years Reunion Commemorative Ed. #1 (Sep)
TV: Munsters Golden Age Adventure (Dec)
Munsters 1313 Halloween Special (Oct)

Will & Byrd, Counselors of the Macabre

By Milton Liah



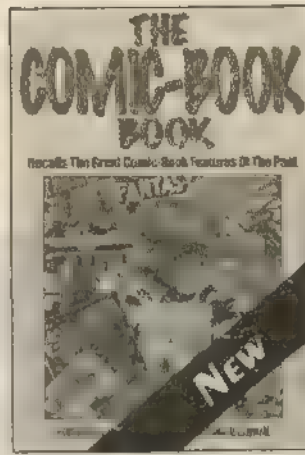
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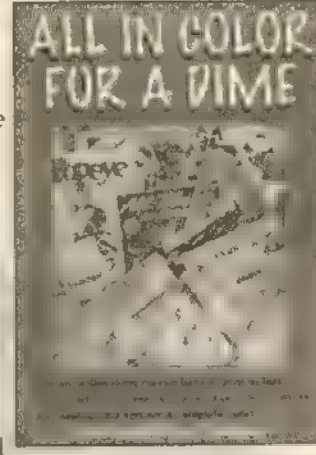
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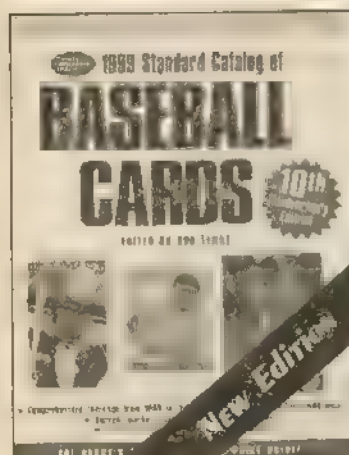
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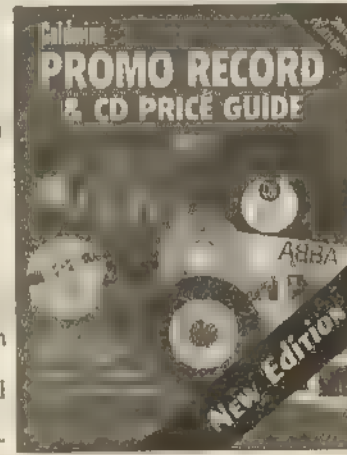
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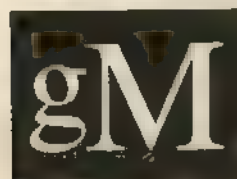
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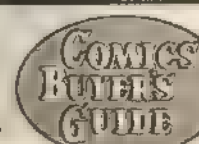
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CALIFORNIA

Jan 17 CA, Los Angeles. Comic Book & Science Fiction Convention, Shrine Auditorium Expo Ctr. 700 W 32nd St. SH. 10am-5pm, A: \$5 Bruce Schwartz 2319-A W. Olive Ave., Burbank, CA 91506. PH: 818-954-8432

CONNECTICUT

Jan 10 CT, West Haven. Comic Book, BB Card & Beanie Baby Show, K of C Hall, 263 Center St., (Northbound) Exit 44 off I-95 or (Southbound) Exit 43 off I-95. SH. 9:30am-3:30pm. A: free. Mrs. Aurelia V. Wacks, PO Box 5078, Milford, CT 06460 PH: 203-874-3545 or FAX: 203-876-8427

Jan 24 CT, Milford. Comic Book, BB Card & Beanie Baby Show, Saint Gabriel School, Tudor Rd., Exit 34 off I-95 take R., SH. 9:30am-3:30pm, A: free. Mrs. Aurelia V. Wacks, PO Box 5078, Milford, CT 06460. PH: 203-874-3545 or FAX: 203-876-8427

Jan 31 CT, West Haven. Comic Book, BB Card & Beanie Baby Show. K of C Hall, 263 Center St., (Northbound) Exit 44 off I-95 or (Southbound) Exit 43 off I-95. SH. 9:30am-3:30pm, A: free. Mrs. Aurelia V.

Wacks, PO Box 5078, Milford, CT 06460. PH: 203-874-3545 or FAX: 203-876-8427

Jan 31 CT, East Hartford. Comic Book Convention. Elks Hall, 148 Robert St. (Exit 58 off of I-84), SH. 11am-5pm, T. 35, F. \$45, A. \$99 The Bookie, Hal Kinney 208 Burnside Ave., E. Hartford, CT 06108 PH: 860-289-1208

Feb 5-7 CT, Danbury. Triple Play Comic Book, Sports Card, Memorabilia & Collectible Toy Show, Fair Mall Rm. 84 & 7 SH. mall hrs., T. 75-8 F. \$175 for 1, \$320 for 2, \$450 for 3, A: free. F&B Sport Cards, Inc. Ferdinand Parascandolo, 482 Retford Ave., SI, NY 10306 PH: 718-667-9588 or 967-9172.

FLORIDA

Jan 18-17 FL, Orlando. Florida Extravaganza (FX '99) Orange Cty. Convention Ctr. 9800 International Dr., SH. Sat. 10am-6pm, Sun. 10am-4pm, T. 1,000 Laura or Bruce Zalkin, PH: 941-343-0094

Jan 22-24 FL, Pensacola. Comic Books, Sports Cards, NASCAR Coins Toys & Stamps Show, Cordova Mall. SH. mall hrs., T. 65, F. \$125 Bases Loaded Promos., Inc., 295 Bryan Rd. McMinnville, TN 37110. PH: 931-939-3063 or 615-731-5009

Jan 29-31 FL, Panama City. Comic Books, Sports Cards, NASCAR Coins, Toys & Stamps Show. Mall. SH. mall hrs., T. 85, F. \$125 Bases Loaded Promos., Inc., 295 Bryan Rd., McMinnville, TN 37110. PH: 931-939-3063 or 615-731-5009

GEORGIA

Jan 10 GA, Atlanta. Comic Book Convention, Marriott Hotel, Gwinnett Place 1775 Pleasant Hill Rd., I-85, Exit 40, SH. 10:30am-5pm T. 80, F. \$55, A. \$4 Wes. PH: 404-361-7682

ILLINOIS

Jan 9 IL, Orland Park. Comic Books, Toys, Beanie, Cars & Card Show Civic Ctr. 1 blk. W. of LaGrange Rd. (Rt. 45) at 147th St. T. 85-6, F. \$30, A. \$1. John Leary, 9522 W. Shore Dr., Oak Lawn, IL 60453 PH: 708-423-1758

708-423-1758

Jan 24 IL, Orland Park. Comic Books, Toys, Beanie, Cars & Card Show. Civic Ctr. 1 blk. W. of LaGrange Rd. (Rt. 45) at 147th St. T. 85-6, F. \$30, A. \$1. John Leary, 9522 W. Shore Dr. Oak Lawn, IL 60453. PH: 708-423-1758

INDIANA

Jan 9-10 IN, Merrillville. Multi-Hobby Collectibles Show. Century Mall US 30 at Broadway. SH. Sat. 10am-9pm, Sun. 11am-5pm. Gene Haberstick, PO Box 908, Goshen, IN 46526 PH: 219-533-1887

Jan 10 IN, Indianapolis. Comic Book & Toy Show, Quality Inn East 3525 N. Shadeland Ave. (Exit I-70 or I-485) SH. 10am-4pm, T. 6, F. \$40 for 1, \$35. ea. for 2 or more. Brian Livingston, PH: 513-522-1231

Jan 15-17 IN, South Bend. Multi Hobby Collectibles Show, Brentwood Hall, 3900 Lincolnway W., 1 mi. E. of Airport, SH. Sat. 10am-9pm, Sun. 11am-5pm, T. 80. Gene Haberstick, PO Box 908, Goshen, IN 46526 PH: 219-533-1887

Jan 17 IN, Lexington. Comic Book & Toy Show, Holiday Inn South. I-75, Exit 104, SH. 10am-4pm, T. 6, F. \$40 for 1, \$35. ea. for 2 or more, A. \$2, 12 & under free. Brian Livingston, PH: 513-522-1231

Jan 23-24 IN, South Bend. Multi Hobby Collectibles Show, Scottsdale Mall 1390 E. Ireland Rd., SH. Sat. 10am-9pm, Sun. 11-5pm, T. 60. Gene Haberstick, PO Box 908, Goshen, IN 46527 PH: 219-533-1887

Jan 30-31 IN, Warsaw. Multi Hobby Collectibles Show, Kosciuszko City Fairgrounds, 1400 E. Smith St. SH. Sat. 10am-6pm, Sun. 11am-5pm, T. 40. Gene Haberstick, PO Box 908, Goshen, IN 46526. PH: 219-533-1887

Feb 6-7 IN, Ft. Wayne. Multi Hobby Collectibles Show, Southtown Mall JS 27 S. at Tillman Rd. SH. Sat. 10am-9pm, Sun. 11am-5pm, T. 50. Gene Haberstick, PO Box 908, Goshen, IN 46527 PH: 219-533-1887

KENTUCKY

Jan 9-10 KY, Louisville. Comic Book, Sports Cards & Collectibles Show, Oxbow Ctr. Mall. I-264 at Shelbyville Rd., SH. mall hrs., T. 75-6, F.

\$95. A: free. Front Row Promotions, Inc., Terry Armstrong, 1745 Houston Ct., New Albany, IN 47150 PH: 812-948-9902

Feb 5-7 KY, Ashland. Comic Book, Sports Card & Racing Coll. Show. Town Center 500 Winchester Ave., SH. Fri. & Sat. 10am-9pm, Sun. 12noon-6pm, T. 30-8, F. \$90 for 1, \$170 for 2, A: free. Badgley Productions, PO Box 3528, Parkersburg, WV 26103. PH: 304-485-8345.

MICHIGAN

Jan 10 MI, Lansing. Sparta Comic Book, Toys & Sports Card Show, Kellogg Center, MSU Campus Big Ten Room A, SH. 10am-4pm T. 70-8, F. \$40. In advance, \$45 at the door, A: \$2. Motor City Conventions, Michael Goldman, 19785 W. 12 Mile Rd. Ste. 231 Southfield, MI 48076. PH: 248-426-8059.

Jan 17 MI, Clawson. Encore-Con Comic Book & Toy Show. Knights Of Columbus, 870 N. Main St. (btw 14 & 15 Mile Rd.) SH. 10am-4pm, T. 45-8, F. \$35. In advance, \$40 day of show A. \$2, 6 & under free. Motor City Conventions, 19785 W. 12 Mile Rd., Ste. 231, Southfield, MI 48076. PH: 248-426-8059

Jan 31 MI, Livonia. Comic Book & Toy Collectable Show. Elks 31117 Plymouth Rd. btw Middlebelt & Merriman, SH. 8:30am-2:30pm, T. 8, F. \$35, A. \$3. Classic Productions, PO Box 472, Fraser, MI 48026 Joseph Pellegrino, PH: 610-775-3280 noon, 790-6290 or John Rogers, PH: 810-939-4205.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Jan 24 NH, Portsmouth. Seacoast Comic Book, Sports Card & Beanie Baby Show, Yokens Restaurant Convention Ctr. Rt. 1, SH. 9am-3pm T. 110, F. \$50, A. \$3, kids free. Chris Morse, 919 Lafayette Rd., Seabrook, NH 03874. PH: 603-474-2283 or 898-4151

NEW JERSEY

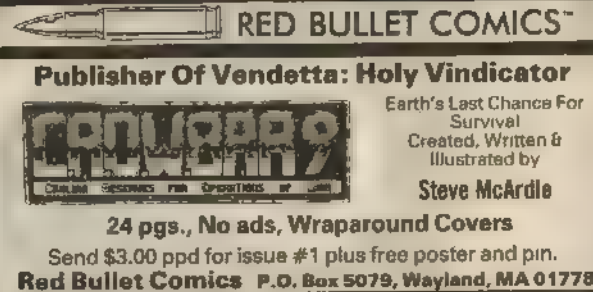
Jan 19 NJ, Elmwood Park. Comic Books Sports Card & Collectibles Show, American Legion Post 147, 1 Legion Place (off Market St.), SH. 9:30am-3:30pm, T. 50-6, A: \$1 Gary Sipes, 1 Garden Ct., N

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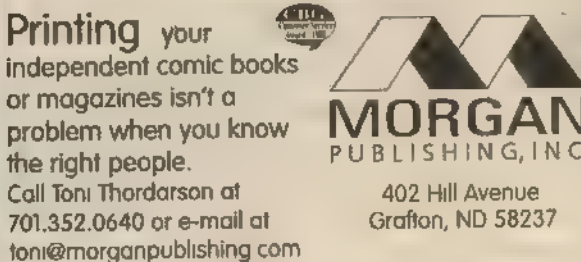
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Garfield, NJ 07026 PH: 973-340-2218 or 796-9717 day of show.
Jan 10 NJ, Clifton. Comic Book Expo. Community Recreation Ctr. 1232 Main Ave. (Rt. 46 to Piaget Ave. to Main Ave.) SH: 10am-4pm, T 30-6, F \$45, A free. J. Paul, 10 Cross St., Montclair, NJ 07042 PH: 973-7662 day of show.
Jan 17 NJ, Garfield. Comic Books, Sports Card & Collectibles Show. Boys Club, 490 Midland Ave. SH: 9:30am-3:30pm, T 70, A \$1. Gary Sipos, 1 Garden Ct., N. Garfield, NJ 07026 PH: 973-340-2218 or 478-7662 day of show.
Jan 17 NJ, Bordentown. Comic Book, Sports Card & Collectibles Show. Armory, Rt. 206, 5 mi. N. of Exit 7 of NJ Tpke., SH: 9:30am-3:30pm, T 8, F \$45, A \$2. EMCEE Conventions, PO Box 151, Hightstown, NJ 08520 PH: 609-448-7585.
Jan 22-24 NJ, Freehold. Triple Play Comic Book, Sports Card, Memorabilia & Collectible Toy Show. Raceway Mall, 3710 Rt. 9, SH: mail hrs., T 100-8, F \$190 for 1 \$360 for 2 \$500 for 3, A free. Ferdinand Parascandolo, 482 Retford Ave., SI, NY 10308 PH: 718-867-9588 or 967-9172.
Jan 24 NJ, Clifton. Comic Books, Sports Card & Collectibles Show. 802 Clifton Ave. (entrance on Colfax Ave.), SH: 9:30am-3:30pm, T 50-8, A \$1. Gary Sipos, 1 Garden Ct., N. Garfield, NJ 07026 PH: 973-340-2218 or 779-9332 day of show.
Jan 24 NJ, Wayne. Comic Book Expo, Holiday Inn. Rt. 46 Service Rd. (Rt. 23 S. to Rt. 46 Service Rd.), SH: 10am-4pm, T 30-8, F \$60 A \$2. J. Paul, 10 Cross St., Montclair, NJ 07042 PH: 973-763-0608.
Jan 31 NJ, Garfield. Comic Books Sports Card & Collectibles Show. Boys Club, 490 Midland Ave., SH: 9:30am-3:30pm, T 70, A \$1. Gary Sipos, 1 Garden Ct., N. Garfield, NJ 07026 PH: 973-340-2218 or 478-7662 day of show.

NEW YORK

Jan 6 NY, Brooklyn. Fri. Nite Comic Book, Sports Card, Non-Sports Card Toys, Action Figure & Collectibles Show. St. Dominics Church, 20th Ave. & Bayridge Pky (75 St.) SH: 6pm-10pm, T 50-8, F \$40 for 1 \$75 for 2, A free. Sunrise Prods., Scotty O'Donnell, PO Box 340625 Ryder Stn., Brooklyn, NY 11234 PH: 718-251-2075 or 241-6477

Ryder Stn., Brooklyn, NY 11234 PH: 718-251-2075 or 241-6477
Jan 15 NY, Manhattan. Big Apple Comic Book & Toy Convention. St. Paul Church 9th Ave. 80th St., SH: Sat 10am-6pm, T 115, A \$6. Mike or Chris, 74-05 Metropolitan Ave., Middle Village, NY 11379 PH: 718-326-2713.
Jan 16 NY, Sayville-LI. Comic Book, Action Figures & Non-Sports Show. Atlas Mart Indoor Flea Market, 5750 Sunrise Hwy. & Broadway, SH: 10am-5pm, T 30, A free. Paul DeCarlo, PH: 516-289-7398.
Jan 16-17 NY, Yonkers. Comic Book & Toys Show. The Mall at Cross County 750 Central Ave., SH: 10am-6pm, T 40-8, F \$125, A free. Steve Tepper, 57-65 59th St. Maspeth, NY 11378 PH: 718-894-5310 or 516-379-8300.
Jan 17 NY, Brooklyn. Comic Book, BB Cards, Beanie Babies, Toys & Collectibles Show. Temple Hill of Flatlands, 2164 Ralph Ave. (at Ave. L) SH: 10am-5pm, T 50-8, F \$40 for 1, \$75 for 2, A free. Sunrise Prods., Scotty O'Donnell, PO Box 340625 Ryder Stn., Brooklyn, NY 11234 PH: 718-251-2075 or 241-6477.
Jan 17 NY, Ozone Park. Comic Books, Sports Card, Coins & Beanie Baby Show. Jewish Ctr. 107-01 Crossbay Blvd., SH: 10am-4pm, T 36, F \$37.50 for 1, \$65 for 2, A \$1. Joseph PH: 718-845-7240 or 848-1111.
Jan 22 NY, Brooklyn. Fri. Nite Comic Book, Sports Card, Non-Sports Card, Toys, Action Figure & Collectibles Show. St. Dominics Church, 20th Ave. & Bayridge Pky (75 St.) SH: 6pm-10pm, T 50-8, F \$40 for 1, \$75 for 2, A free. Sunrise Prods., Scotty O'Donnell, PO Box 340625 Ryder Stn., Brooklyn, NY 11234 PH: 718-251-2075 or 241-6477.
Jan 30 NY, New York City. Comic Books, Sports Cards & Memorabilia Show. St. Ignace's Cathedral, 221 E. 27th St., b/w 2nd & 3rd Ave. SH: 10am-4pm, T 25-8, F \$40, A \$1. Edmond Elmokan, 18 Oakland Ave. W. Hempstead, NY 11552 PH: 516-564-9319.
Jan 31 NY, Brooklyn. Comic Book, BB Cards, Beanie Babies, Toys & Collectibles Show. Temple Hill of Flatlands, 2164 Ralph Ave. (at Ave. L) SH: 10am-5pm, T 50-8, F \$40 for 1, \$75 for 2, A free. Sunrise Prods., Scotty O'Donnell, PO Box 340625 Ryder Stn., Brooklyn, NY 11234 PH: 718-251-2075 or 241-6477

11234 PH: 718-251-2075 or 241-6477
Feb 5 NY, Brooklyn. Fri. Nite Comic Book, Sports Card, Non-Sports Card, Toys, Action Figure & Collectibles Show. St. Dominics Church, 20th Ave. & Bayridge Pky (75 St.) SH: 6pm-10pm, T 50-8, F \$40 for 1, \$75 for 2, A free. Sunrise Prods., Scotty O'Donnell, PO Box 340625 Ryder Stn., Brooklyn, NY 11234 PH: 718-251-2075 or 241-6477.
Feb 6 NY, Sayville-LI. Comic Book, Action Figures & Non-Sports Show. Atlas Mart Indoor Flea Market, 5750 Sunrise Hwy. & Broadway, SH: 10am-5pm, T 30, A free. Paul DeCarlo, PH: 516-289-7398.
NORTH CAROLINA
Jan 16-17 NC, Raleigh. 30th Annual North State Comic Book, Toy & Hobby Show. State Fairgrounds, 1025 Blueridge Rd., SH: Sat. 9am-5pm Sun. 10am-4:30pm, F sold out. Carolina Hobby Expo, PH: 704-786-8373.
Jan 30 NC, Fayetteville. 27th Annual Sandhills Toy & Hobby Show. Charlie Rose Expo Ctr. Just off Hwy. 301 S., SH: 9am-4pm, T 225. Carolina Hobby Expo, PH: 704-786-8373.

PUERTO RICO

Jan 16-17 PR, Isebel. Third Fair of Comic Books, Sports Card & Memorabilia Show. Centro Comercial Cooperativo. Ave. Juan Ortiz Hernandez #1 SH: 9am-6pm, T 25-8, F \$35, A free. Harold Acevedo or Pebe Perez, PH: 787-748-8739 or 872-1111.

TEXAS

Jan 30-31 TX, Houston. Nostalgia Promotions Collectors Show, Holiday Inn. 7787 Katy Hwy., I-10 W. at Antoine Exit, SH: 10am-4pm, T 70, A \$35, 12 & under free. Nostalgia Promotions, Andy Mingle, PH: 281-748-5154.

VIRGINIA

Jan 24 VA, Harrisonburg. Comic Books & BB Cards Show, C. Glickerson Comm. Ctr. 305 S. Dogwood Dr., SH: 10am-4pm, T 50-8, F \$25, A.

\$1 David Wigginton, 305 S. Dogwood Dr. Harrisonburg, VA 22801 PH: 540-433-9168.

Feb 6 VA, Tysons. Corner-McLean. Monthly Comic Book, Magic, Toy & Trading Card Show, Tysons Corner Westpark Hotel, 8401 Westpark Dr. take Exit 10 (Rt. 7 W.) off I-495 (Washington DC area) SH: 10am-4pm, T 90-6, F \$65 for 1st, \$60 for 2nd \$55 ea. add'l, A \$2, under 5 free. Capital Associates, Inc., Jeffrey Rocen, 7952 Arden Ct., Vienna, VA 22027 PH: 703-912-1993.

WEST VIRGINIA

Jan 10 WV, Charleston. Comic Con, Community Ctr. 801 Jefferson Rd. (I-64 at Exit 54), SH: 10am-4pm, T 28-6, F \$45, A \$2, 6 & under free. Jeff Harper, 5220 Loma Linda NE, Canton, OH 44714 PH: 330-499-6056.

Jan 15-17 WV, Morgantown. Celebrity Comic Book, Sports Card & Racing Collectibles Show. Mall. Exit 152 off I-79, SH: Fri. & Sat. 10am-9pm, Sun. 12noon-6pm, T 40-8, F \$90 for 1, \$170 for 2, A free. Badgley Promotions, PO Box 3528, Parkersburg, WV 26103 PH: 304-485-8345.

WISCONSIN

Jan 10 WI, Kenosha. Comic Book, Sports Card, Game & Beanie Baby Show, Best Western Executive Inn Hotel, I-94 & Hwy. 50, SH: 9am-4pm, T 24-8, F \$28, A \$50. Bill White, PH: 414-943-4147 or 694-8422.

CANADA

Jan 18 BC, Vancouver. Comicon, Heritage Hall, 3102 Main St. SH: 11am-6pm, T 50-6, F \$45-\$50, A \$2. Leonard Wong, PO Box 48873, Bental Stn., Vancouver BC V7X 1A8 PH: 604-322-6412.

Jan 31 ON, Cambridge. Comic Book, Sports Card & Collectibles Show, Hespler Arena, 640 Ellice Rd., SH: 10am-4pm, T 83-6, F \$27, A \$1. Brian Darling, 20 Harvest Ct., Kitchener ON N2P 1T3 PH: 519-748-6967 or 621-1058.

ALIVE TO BE LUCKY

By Brent Frankenhoff

Despite its major role in the creation of nearly every super-hero and villain in comics, luck itself hasn't been one of the flashier powers for heroes and villains over the years. Despite their lack of visual impact, characters utilizing the powers of luck have been memorable, if for no other reason than the sheer silliness of their actions.

Lucky duck. Or is that goose? Whatever...



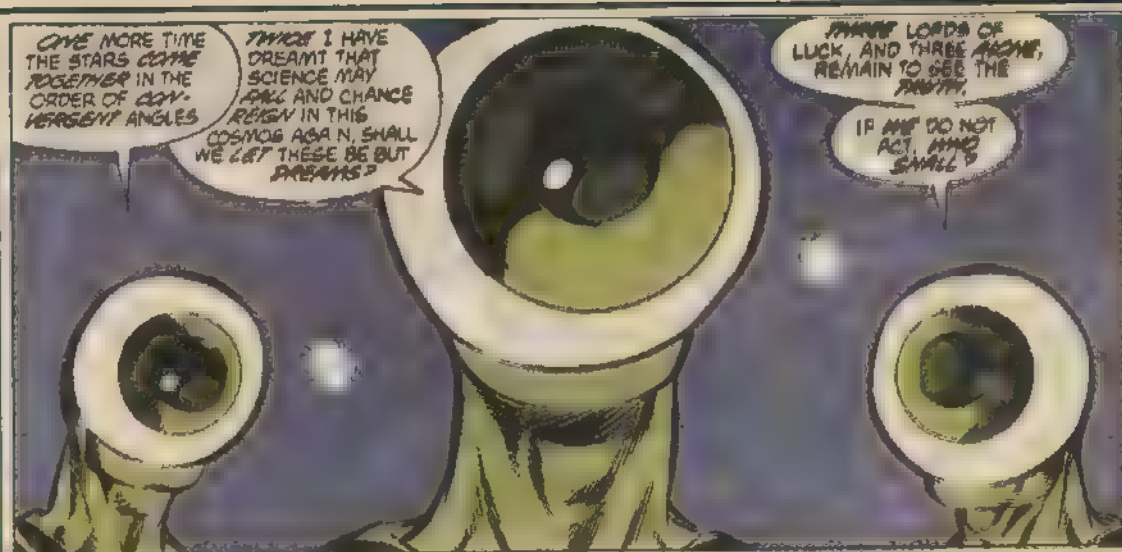
[**Dej!** Jan 48] The epitome of luck has to be personified (duckified?) in Gladstone Gander, the luckiest duck in the world. Donald's cousin made his first appearance in *Walt Disney's Comics & Stories* #88. The good-fortuned goose has never had to work a day in his life because throughout his life, good fortune has always come his way, except on his birthday, when he experiences a day of the worst luck imaginable.

The 364 days of exceptionally good luck that Gladstone has each year have led to his slothful ways. Many examples abound of Gladstone's fortuitous happenings, but some of the best occur when he and Donald compete for a prize. No matter how hard Donald tries or how many tickets he buys in a contest, Gladstone almost always comes out on top without even trying, pushing Donald to try that much harder the next time. Gladstone's luck has led him into numerous scrapes over the years, and it's usually up to Donald and his nephews to rescue Gladstone, who always claims that it was his uncommon luck that brought the group to his aid.

If it weren't for bad luck...

[**DC:** Mar 66] A DC villain who utilized luck to a degree was Major Disaster, whose career started with a bit of bad luck for Green Lantern — in *Green Lantern* #43 (Mar 66) — that turned out to be good luck for small-time crook Paul Booker, who found the diary that GL's friend Tom Kalmaku kept of the hero's adventures.

Booker not only learned Green Lantern's secret identity and weaknesses, he also learned The Flash's secrets and used this knowledge in his new identity as Major Disaster. Initially, Disaster used scientific devices to create natural disasters, but later he internalized the power and can now cause disasters just by thinking about them.



Looking strangely like distant cousins of Howard the Duck's Soofi, The Luck Lords narrated *Legion of Super-Heroes* #45, the group's 30th anniversary issue.

The future of fortune

[**DC:** Apr 58] Luck in the DC universe isn't just confined to the 20th century. Legion of Super-Heroes co-founder Lightning Lad's entire career has been based on turns of luck, both good and bad, starting with his origin. That was when he, his brother Mekt, and his twin sister, Ayla, crash-landed on the planet Korbal, where a group of lightning monsters attacked the trio, giving them lightning-based powers. As a Legionnaire, Lightning Lad was killed in battle but eventually resurrected by the sacrifice of Chameleon Kid's pet Protty. Later, though, LL lost an arm to the Moby Dick of Space and was used by Starfinger, who gained control of him through his robotic arm. (Don't worry. LL's arm eventually was regenerated.)

Even his romance with Saturn Girl was influenced by luck to a degree, when, due to a rule in the Legion Constitution that married couples could not be active Legionnaires, he and Saturn Girl were away from Earth when The Dark Circle attacked. So it was that the duo escaped capture and led a resistance effort that eventually overthrew the invaders. Lightning Lad's ties to the laws of probability were summarized in *Legion of Super-Heroes* #45 (Apr 88), the group's 30th anniversary issue, which featured The Luck Lords. They acted as a Greek chorus, chronicling Lightning Lad's adventures over the years.



Turn back the clock for two honorable mentions

[**Eisner:** Jun 2 40] **Luck, be a lady.** The Eisner Studios' Lady Luck didn't have luck-based powers. She began as a sort of female version of the crime fiction classic *The Saint*, complete with pluck, a criminal bent, and a calling card. She appeared as a back-up in the *Spirit* newspaper supplements and occasionally used of luck-connected themes, including four-leafed clovers and horseshoes. She made her first appearance (seen here) in the first of the *Spirit* newspaper sections and found her way in reprint form briefly into comic books. As luck would have it, she eventually spent most of her time fighting crime in broadly comic style.

[**Harvey:** Aug 41] **Another Black Cat to cross your path.** Harvey Comics wouldn't forgive us, if we overlooked a character whose name would seem to indicate a tie-in to the luck motif, but whose abilities were only those of an ordinary crime-fighter. Linda Turner, better known as The Black Cat, fought crime beginning the very first Harvey comic book, *Pocket Comics*. Her adventures ran through the 1950s and into the early '60s. The Hollywood actress used a variety of martial arts moves on her adversaries. Turner shared some of these moves with her readers in one-page features. The only part luck played in her adventures was that no one associated a beautiful red-headed actress with a beautiful red-headed crimefighter who only appeared when the actress wasn't around. A revival in the '90s briefly brought her back to a new audience. Who knows when her fortunes will bring her back again?

Luck glands?



In one of the — please pardon the expression — luckiest get-aways ever, Professor Fortune overcame three Justice Leaguers with carbon monoxide in *Justice League of America* #6.

[DC: Sep 61] One of the best examples of the ridiculous twists comics luck can make is Professor Amos Fortune, who first appeared in *Justice League of America* #6 in the story "The Wheel of Misfortune." Due to his unfortunate name, Fortune had studied all aspects of luck over the years and become a professional gambler.

During his studies, he discovered a pair of glands in the human body, one of which influenced good luck, while the other influenced bad. After inventing a device that could affect the glands, he took on the Justice League, not realizing his device would have no effect on The Martian Manhunter, who, of course, wasn't human. And, before you ask, Superman didn't participate in the adventure, so his presumed lack of luck glands wasn't mentioned.

Fortune faced The JLA several times, eventually discovering a force emanating from the stars that influenced card games. He used this new knowledge to help found The Royal Flush Gang in *Justice League of America* #43 (Mar 66). The gang was a group of Fortune's childhood friends who influenced people's behavior using the force from the stars: "stellaration." After The JLA defeated them, a new group was later formed that retained the card motif but no longer relied on luck in its endeavors.



Professor Amos Fortune found jobs for his childhood friends when he formed The Royal Flush Gang in *Justice League of America* #43 (Mar 66).

that retained the card motif but no longer relied on luck

Marvel's 'Miss' Fortunes

While it seems to be more common in the DC universe, Marvel has produced at least three characters who have utilized luck as a motif. Curiously, all three are heroines and two started their careers as villains.



[Marvel: Mar 64] **Casting a hex.** The best-known has to be The Scarlet Witch. The daughter of Magneto, Wanda Maximoff has the mutant ability to alter probability through the use of hexbolts. Introduced in *X-Men* #4, she had a career which began as a member of her father's Brotherhood of Evil (although she didn't know at the time that Magneto was her father). Later, as a member of the second group of Avengers, Wanda was limited in her use of hexes or, as *The Official Handbook of the Marvel Universe* put it: "hex-spheres, a finite pocket of reality-disrupting quasi-psionic force, which upon reaching its intended target, causes a disturbance in the molecular-level probability field surrounding the target." Over the years, she has received training in the supernatural from Agatha Harkness and now can not only alter probability with her hexes, but can also affect many natural elements in her battles. The strength and duration of her hexes has also increased.

[Marvel: Jul 79] **Crossing your path.** The second villain-turned-hero is Felicia Hardy, better known as The Black Cat, who first faced Spider-Man in *Amazing Spider-Man* #194. Originally a cat burglar who set traps to convince her adversaries that she had bad luck powers, she eventually sought The Kingpin's help to acquire *real* powers, including the ability to cast bad luck in an area around herself. While she fought crime for a while alongside Spider-Man, her bad-luck ability began to affect his performance, and The Kingpin convinced her that continued contact would only worsen the situation. Before The Black Cat could end their relationship, which had taken on a private as well as a professional aspect, Spider-Man ended it himself. The two have teamed up a few times over the years since, and Hardy dated Flash Thompson at one point.

[Marvel: Jun-Aug 82] **Ireland's lucky lass.** One of several international superheroes created for the three-issue *Marvel Super-Heroes' Contest of Champions* (and never seen again) was Shamrock. Like The Scarlet Witch, the Irish super-heroine has the psionic ability to affect probability fields, but, unlike Wanda, Shamrock doesn't have conscious control over her power.

Right: Spider-Man finds out the hard way not to let a Black Cat cross his path in *Peter Parker, The Spectacular Spider-Man* #98 (Jan 85).



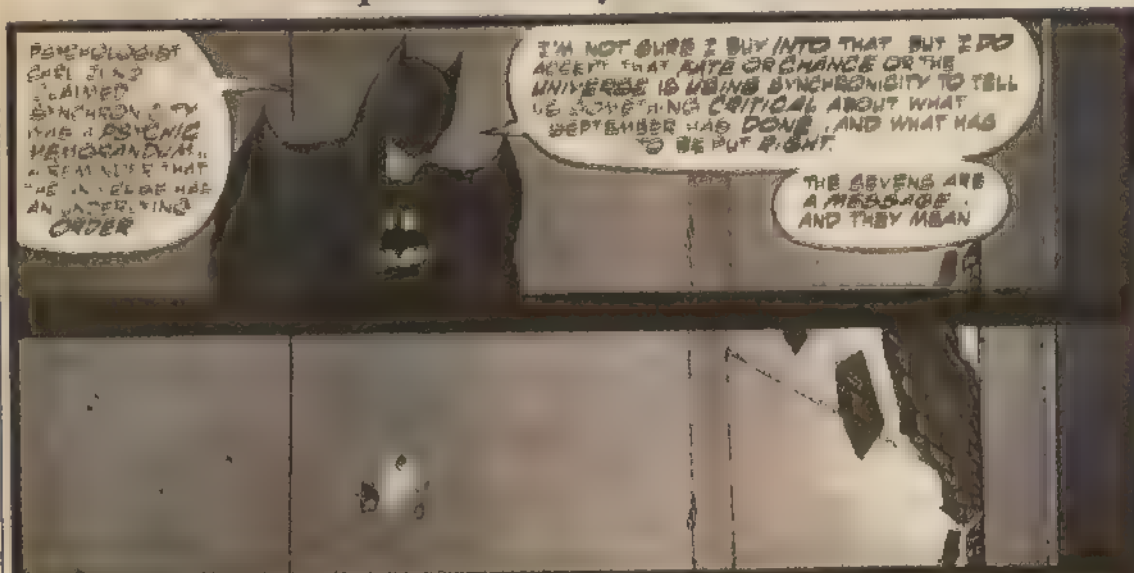
Unlucky 'Thirteen'

[DC: Nov 51] One DC character who definitely doesn't believe in luck, coincidence, or probability is "Ghost-Breaker" Dr. Thirteen. Introduced in *Star Spangled Comics* #122, and descended from a family whose scientific investigations had often been mistaken as witchcraft, Terrence Thirteen embarked on a career to debunk superstition and the supernatural: a career that was very successful until he encountered The Phantom Stranger, whose mystical abilities eluded Thirteen's explanations.

Largely forgotten for many years, Dr. Thirteen recently emerged in a one-shot *Vertigo Visions* in 1998.



Improbabability drives him



What's the message? You'll have to find a copy of JLA #18 and 19 and find out.

[DC: May-Jun 98] Recently, the new JLA faced Julian September, a professor of quantum mechanics who invented an engine of chance that affected the laws of probability to the point at which several members of the team vanished (reducing the group to seven members), worldwide disasters were triggered, and other events involving the "lucky number" occurred. The two part story in JLA #18 and #19 ended with the team's remaining members, aided by The Atom (the seventh member to join the original League), putting probability back on course and bringing things back to normal. September was found dead of a heart attack, a victim of his own probability altering.

Yeah, but can he sing?



[DC: Sum 44] The villainous use of luck has even passed down through generations, as in the case of The Gambler, a Golden Age Green Lantern foe who was a member of the Injustice Society of the World. Habitual gambler Steven Sharpe began his criminal career in Green Lantern #12 (of the Golden Age series), when a freak accident wrecked an armored car in front of him. Remembering his gambling grandfather's belief that lucky people are the ones who take chances, Sharpe styled his costume to resemble the garb of a 19th century riverboat gambler and became an expert with a modified derringer and throwing knife. Additionally, he became a master of disguise and changed his appearance so many times that he once said that even he had forgotten what he originally looked like.

[DC: Jan 87] During The Gambler's years of battling the original Green Lantern, he also found time to have a family, and his granddaughter Becky acquired the psionic ability to influence luck and probability with a pair of special dice. She took the name Hazard (the English

name for the game of craps) and joined Injustice, Unlimited, the modern-day incarnation of The Injustice Society, in Infinity, Inc. #34 on the condition that the group couldn't kill anyone. Later, she avenged her grandfather's defeat at a Las Vegas casino by influencing favorable outcomes of the rigged games



Hard-luck heroes

By Scott Brick

Think you've been unlucky? You don't know what bad luck is. Check out the following list of comic-book characters who suffer from perennially dim fortunes. (And, Spoiler Warning: If you haven't yet plowed through your stack of back issues, we're giving away developments in storylines like that in 1988's *Hulk*.)

Spider-Man — When he doesn't act responsibly, his uncle dies. When he *does* act responsibly, Gwen Stacy dies. And, to make matters worse, he once dated the Black Cat!

The Hulk — Bruce Banner's wife Betty died when Peter David left last year. John Byrne, the guy who married the couple years ago, won't even revive her now that he's back on the series. Life's tough for The Jade Giant.

Jason Todd — This guy's own fans demanded his death. In September 1988, the Bat-writers decided to hold a telephone poll to determine whether the second Robin lived or died. The result? Rest in peace, Jason.

Swordsman — This guy died from a lightning bolt right on his blade. No, seriously, right on his blade! Kang had the whole universe to aim at, yet the lightning hits a sword no more than four inches wide. A mere third of a foot! What're the odds?

Wonder Man — This guy's died too many times to keep track of, and, no matter *how* many times he comes back, he just can't seem to win The Scarlet Witch's heart. And his brother's the Grim Reaper! Talk about unlucky.

Solomon Grundy — After nearly five decades of having heroes trying to kill him, Grundy finally incarnates in a version everyone loves. His old enemies become friends, he doesn't have to live in sewers and eat frogs any more — and what happens? A building falls on him.

Deadpool — Wade Wilson was a gun-for-hire with a heart of coal who'd been "volunteered" for the Weapon X program. After receiving enhanced abilities, Wade discovered that, not only did they give him skin like a pepperoni pizza, but also gave him cancer! How unjust, how unfair, how — unlucky, dare we say?

The Flash — Barry Allen watched his wife die, was convicted of a murder he didn't commit, then saved the universe at the cost of his own life. And, to make matters worse, Barry's thanks for saving said universe was to have his editors decide *not* to bring him back to life, even though Marv Wolfman came up with a plausible means to do it. (See *CBG* #1300.)

Bucky — The only hero Marvel will never bring back to life. Need we say more?

Hourman — Rex Tyler's Miracle pill gave him enhanced abilities, yet, after five decades in the hero biz, Rex discovered that Miracle is addictive. When someone fights the good fight against everything from Axis hordes to Surtur's flames, it seems a bit unlucky to get a death by drug abuse in return.

Captain Marvel — The first Captain Marvel had the unfortunate nickname "The Big Red Cheese." The second Captain Marvel, despite being impervious to all sorts of cosmic menaces, couldn't withstand nerve gas; he contracted cancer after a getting a lungful of the stuff. The third Captain Marvel was so bland she dressed in a plain white costume, ultimately changing her name to Photon just to get a little respect. All in all, a pathetically unlucky legacy.

Honorable mention:

Son of Satan Self-explanatory

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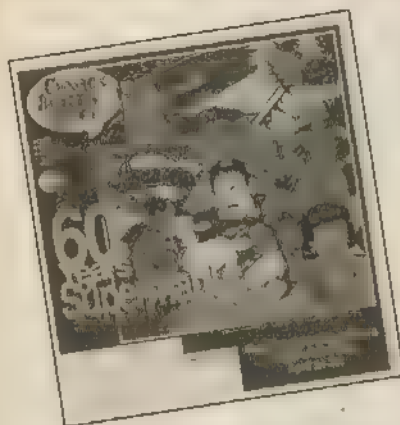
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259 FN- glossy	77.00		336 FN/VF	20.00	377 NM-	45.00	125 FN	42.00	164 FN-	15.75	16 FN-	49.00	55 FN/VF	25.50
260 FN glossy	88.00		337 VG	9.00	378 FN	11.75	126 FN	42.00	165 FN/VF	26.00	17 FN/VF	71.00	56 FN+	18.00
261 VG glossy	41.00		338 FN+	17.00	379 VF++ minor cmr or/c		127 VF/NM sharp	130.00	166 VF++	48.00	18 FN	52.00	57 FN+	20.00
262 VG	41.00		339 FN-	13.25			128 FN/VF	80.00	167 FN/VF	25.00	19 VG+	37.00	58 FN+	20.00
263 FN glossy	66.00		340 FN+	18.00	380 FN++	14.00	129 VF+	245.00	168 FN+	21.00	20 VF/NM glossy	180.00	59 FN+	67.00
264 VG-	35.00		341 FN++	19.00	381 VF++	29.50	130 VF	90.00	169 VF+	68.00	21 VF/NF-	83.00	60 VF	26.00
265 FN glossy	97.00		342 FN-	13.00	382 FN+	13.00	131 FN/VF	60.00	170 VG+	12.75	22 FN+	52.00	61 VF	37.50
266 FN	66.00		343 FN+	16.25	EIGHTY PAGE GIANT (DC)		132 FN+	47.00	171 FN/VF	23.00	23 FN	45.00	62 VF+	30.00
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269 FN- glossy	60.00		345 FN	13.00	8 VF+Secret Origins	318.00	134 VF- glossy	75.00	173 VF++	45.00	25 VF minor cmr or/c	90.00	64 FN+	14.50
270 FN-	56.00		346 FN+	16.00	9 VF++	118.00	135 VF-	80.00	174 FN	16.25	26 FN/VF	88.00	65 VF++	32.00
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275 VG/FN	41.75		351 FN	14.25	107 FN/VF	310.00	140 VG	26.00	179 VF	33.50	31 VF/NF-	70.00	22 VG/FN	880.00
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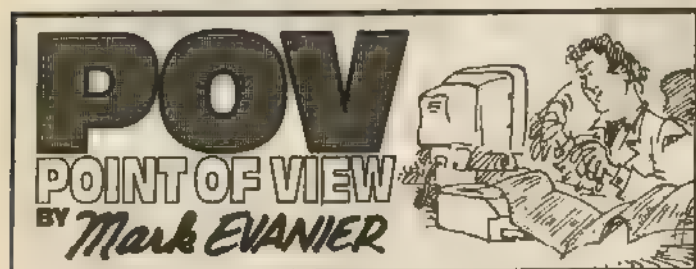
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Time now for another M.E. Trip Report — a service of this column since 1994. This excursion, like one I took last year, goes first to Mid-Ohio-Con in Columbus, Ohio, then on to New York. That report was serialized here over four issues, but I think I can get this sojourn into three, if I avoid long words.

So fasten your seat belts and, if you are seated in one of the two exit rows and do not wish to perform the designated functions or if you have a physical condition that prevents this, please ring your Flight Attendant call button and we will make every effort to re-seat you. Let's go!

"If you ever hear anyone in the business tell you that Joe Sinnott was late with a job ... or unprofessional ... or in any way hard to work with — that person is lying."
— Mark Evanier

Day One: You don't want to hear about Day One. It was supposed to involve a flight from Los Angeles to Las Vegas, a one-hour layover in Vegas, then we change planes and proceed to Columbus. Instead, a gent at America West with the I.Q. of a Beanie Baby decided we should go to Phoenix and wait four-and-a-half hours in the airport there. ("We" is me and my terrific friend, Carolyn Kelly. By the way, Day One was Friday, 11/27/98.)

We fooled America West; we checked our carry-ons, took a cab into Downtown Phoenix, and spent the time shopping. We also ate at a place called the Teriyaki Temple, which is apparently the only restaurant in the city that does not feature "southwestern" or "Tex-Mex" cuisine. There was a

Mr. Evanier's eventful excursion

Hooters in the same complex, but it seemed silly to go there, since we're from Los Angeles and all of L.A. is one big Hooters franchise.

Day Two: OK, you'd probably like to hear about Day Two of the trip, which was Day One of Mid-Ohio Con — as in years past, one of the friendliest, best-run conventions I've ever attended. And remember — this is coming from someone who's been going to comics cons since before a woman would be caught dead at one.

A fellow named Roger Price puts these on with an amazing degree of personal attention to his guests — and by "guests," I mean those who show up and pay the admission price, along with the advertised celebrities. It's not only good manners, it's good business, as well.

The friendliness trickles down to all levels of his gatherings, reminding me in many ways of the San Diego soirees before they got to be as large and densely populated as the entirety of San Diego. Roger has more Ohio conventions planned, as well as a few in other towns, including New Orleans next Memorial Day. Whenever I can make one of his, I will. But getting back to Columbus ...

Got to see, among other fine folks, Ken Penders, William Stout, Terry Beatty, Tom Lyle, Don Rosa, Tony Isabella, Bob Ingersoll, Dan Davis, Lurene Haines, Howard M. Shum, Mark Waid, Craig Boldman, and Mark Schultz. Guess which of these people paid me a dollar to mention them in this column

Great to spend some quality time with the best damned inker in the history of comics, Joe Sinnott, and his lovely spouse, Betty. Joe, whom I've known for pert near 30 years, is also one of the nicest gentlemen I've ever met — and you will never hear a negative word about him from anyone who's ever worked with him.

Or let me put it this way: If you ever hear anyone in the business tell you that Joe Sinnott was late with a job ... or unprofessional ... or in any way hard to work with — that person is lying. Lying through his teeth.

Joe is more than an inker. He was and is a fine illustrator of all kinds of comics, but mainly those depicting real people in real life. You know: the kind no one publishes any more.

Years before *Fantastic Four* #1, he was drawing splendid war com-

ics for Stan Lee when he got the call. Most of the artists then working for Stan inked what they pencilled, and vice-versa, with Jack Kirby being an exception. All the usual Kirby inkers, like Dick Ayers, were otherwise occupied, so Stan said to Joe, "Would you mind taking a crack at it?" Joe said OK and embellished a short war story. What he did with it was so fine that Stan sent him another. Soon, Joe had achieved something very special in comics: He had elevated the art of inking to a new level.

Previously, inking another's pencil work was a task that artists generally did for one of two reasons, one being that they weren't good enough to be pencillers. The other — probably more common — was a simple financial benefit. Some guys could make more money as inkers.

Artists are all different. Some prefer to pencil and, when they create a page of finished comic-book art on their own, they think of the pencil work as the drawing — and the inking as a chore that is necessary to make the pencil art printable. (Kirby was in this category.) Others are more comfy with a pen or brush in their mitts; to them, pencilling a page is a matter of deciding where everything's going to go and laying in some structure. Then they switch to ink, and the real drawing begins.

Some artists are also slow starters. Put a piece of blank paper in front of them, and the possibilities are so infinite that they don't know where to begin. A top comic-strip artist once confessed to me that the hardest thing about his job was blank paper.

So what he'd do was hire someone else to ghost-pencil his strip. He'd pay good money for a seasoned pro to do this — then he'd erase darn near everything the other guy did and re-pencil everything and ink it. This actually took him less time, he claimed, than starting from scratch.

Such artists often become inkers. Inkers don't have to start each morning with a sheet of blank paper.

If you have that kind of "block" — or if you're simply faster and/or happier inking than pencilling — it can make monetary sense. With comics being (then) such a poor-paying field, you did what brought the best paycheck. Editors have been known to strategically adjust an artist's pencilling and inking rates to encourage him to do the

kind of labor they most desperately needed.

One of many interesting things I learned from Joe Sinnott this visit was that the above did not really apply to him. He figured that, on a per-hour basis, he made roughly the same cash inking that he would have pencilling — and he never suffered the "blank paper" problems that caused others, like Frank Giacoia, to specialize in inks. Instead, he inked because that's where the employers needed him — and he made himself invaluable in that job description.

As mentioned earlier, Joe's specialty as an artist has always been real people in real settings. Over the years, he has drawn a great many "documentary" type comics — especially for the old *Treasure Chest* comics — that demonstrated a superb ability to depict historical events. He also put these skills to good use on war and Western comics.

But in the '60s, the trend in comics shifted away from reality, and it has never really shifted back. Since about, oh, the time of *Fantastic Four* #1, any artist who couldn't do super-heroes has been at a disadvantage, making a living in comic books. Recently, I read an interview with Barry Windsor-Smith in which he perfectly described the problem many faced:

"Stan loved my [first] stuff because, although it was pretty amateur and klutzy, it had the essence of Jack Kirby about it, and that was what sold Marvel Comics in those days. Stan wanted every penciller in his employ to draw like Jack — not necessarily copy him, I must point out, because that has been misconstrued for too long — but, rather, to adapt from Kirby's dynamism and dramatic staging ... It was horrid watching Don Heck — a perfectly adept illustrator of everyday things and occurrences — struggle to create a dynamism in his work that was simply not a part of his natural capabilities."

I think that's all true, except that I would not fault Stan Lee to such a degree. Pretty much every editor in comics has encouraged artists to be whatever they thought they needed at the time. I suspect that, if the next Charles Schulz wandered into a San Diego con with samples today, someone doing "portfolio reviews" would suggest he go off and study Todd McFarlane. What Stan was doing — and Don Heck himself believed this — was nudging artists to be-



At a 1981 convention, Joe Sinnott (right) spent time with one of his fans.

come what they'd have to become to continue getting work.

Joe Sinnott, in more than four decades of working for Marvel on super-hero books, has rarely pencilled.

He could have done that kind of art and done it decently, I'm sure. But, like Heck, the dynamism of super-heroes was not something that came naturally to him. So instead, he began inking and, through the excellence of his work, became invaluable to his employers. He could make the best pencillers look their best and make the worst look almost like the best.

I once heard a Marvel editor fretting over a particularly poor pencil job that a new artist had done. It was, as handed in, unprintable — and they doubted its maker could do much to improve it. The immediate solution was to see if they could squeeze it into Sinnott's schedule. "Joe can save anything," they all said.

Joe has always been widely respected in the industry. Here are two testimonials of many I could cite:

Sol Brodsky, who was Marvel's production manager at the time, told me that when Joe inked his first *Fantastic Four* — #5 — it drew the first fan mail he had ever seen for inking. The fans then didn't know about inking but, Brodsky said, they knew that #5 looked better than the issues before it, which was, of course, because of Joe. (This was an especially gracious and earnest comment from Sol Brodsky, since he inked #3 and

#4.)

And Wally Wood loved Joe's inking. Wood had inked Jack Kirby on the *Sky Masters* newspaper strip and the *Challengers of the Unknown* comic books, and some felt that was the best Kirby-inking of all time. But Wood told me that, years later when he saw Kirby-Sinnott art, his immediate reaction was, "Ah, that's how Jack should be inked."

So this is how Joe Sinnott kept working all those years: by becoming the best, most indispensable inker in the business. Couldn't have happened to a nicer guy.

Change of topic: For an upcoming column, I'm compiling a list of the all-time great typos and printing errors in comics, and Joe gave me a likely contender. It's a new book from the A.C.G. people called *Bat Men*, reprinting some of Joe's fine comics and cartoons about the world of baseball. The lead story is a biography of Babe Ruth but someone got the pages out of order and created an inadvertent E.C. comic book...

In the book as printed, the Babe dies, then goes on to become the greatest baseball player of all time. And you know what? Even after his death, he still hits better than anyone on the current Dodgers roster.

Messrs. Sinnott, Isabella, Stout, and Penders joined me for another Jack Kirby Tribute Panel. Bill Stout spoke of how nervous he was when he assisted Mike Royer with the inking on an issue of *The*

Demon — how long it took him, how much he learned. Bill is a long-time pal and one of our great fantasy illustrators, and I just made a note that I oughta write a column about him here, someday. Another one for the list.

Then I was honored to host a panel featuring Adam West and Frank Gorshin: the title character and the Riddler from the classic *Batman* TV show. Not much to report other than that the crowd loved everything they said, especially when Mr. Gorshin trotted out his impression of Kirk Douglas. I recall some film critic opining that, as Mr. Douglas's career evolved, he sounded more and more like Frank Gorshin doing him.

Also today, I made the classic mistake of the rookie collector — an error I thought I'd outgrown by the end of my first day at my first comics convention. Anyone who prowls a dealers' room with a list of missing issues knows this dictum: *When you locate something you need, purchase it immediately.* Hell, I knew that rule and have advised others of it. Still, somehow, my brain was in the Phantom Zone and I let a "find" get away from me.

Roaming the aisles, I spotted a couple of issues I needed. My want list is very short; everything I don't have, I either don't want or don't want at the price I'd have to pay for it. But there are a few issues I'm seeking and, suddenly, there they were before me — in good condition

and reasonably sticker-priced. What's more, they were with a dealer I knew — someone I believed could be talked down a buck or three. Perfect.

The dealer was in the middle of another transaction, and I was looking for someone in the hall, so I thought, "I'll come back in a few minutes and get these." I left them right there in the bins, which was a giant, economy-size mistake. It always is.

When I came back, perhaps 500 seconds later, they were gone. Purchased. Sold. On their way home with someone else. I asked the seller and he said, "Oh, a guy just bought 'em. Good price on them, too. You know, I hardly ever see copies of those books. Next time I get some in, I'm gonna have to charge a lot more. That is, if I ever see any more."

That's right. Rub it in.

Carolyn and I had dinner with the Sinnotts, Isabella and Ingersoll, Thom Zahler, Tom Batiuk (of *Funky Winkerbean* fame), and the latter Tom's son. And that's about it for Day Two of our trip, Day One of Mid-Ohio Con.

Tune in next week for Day Three of the trip, Day Two of the Mid-Ohio Con — and then it's on to New York and more of those Broadway show reviews that you all love so much. (No, no. Don't thank me. Just giving the public what it wants.)

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Some Marvel Silver Agers got That Lucky Break — Or was it so lucky?

Dear Mr. Silver Age:

I see in *Mass o' Media* that Marvel is making a lot of movies these days. Why didn't more super-heroes star in movies in the Silver Age?

Linda T., Hollywood, Calif.

DC Screen Stars

DC has its own share of Silver Age movie and TV stars. Here are some of my favorites:

- Lois Lane went to Hollywood in *Superman's Girlfriend Lois Lane* #2 (May 58).
- "Neslo" was host of Midnight Scare Theatre in *Superman's Pal Jimmy Olsen* #38 (Jul 59).
- Jimbo helped Mammoth Studios make a Superman movie in *Jimmy Olsen* #42 (Jan 60).
- Superman's Pal starred in another dimension's horror movie in *Jimmy Olsen* #43 (Mar 60).
- The Bizarros made a horror movie (with a handsome actor, of course) in *Adventure Comics* #292 (Jan 62).
- Our favorite cub reporter produced a monster movie in *Jimmy Olsen* #84 (Apr 65).
- Batman stayed home to watch himself on TV in *Batman* #183 (Aug 66).
- Clark Kent was caught changing to Superman by Candid Camera in *Action Comics* #345 (Jan 67).
- Roger Vickers, stand-in for the star of the Green Lantern television show, was killed on-screen in *Green Lantern* #55 (Sep 67).
- The Kents got their youth returned as the result of starring (without their knowledge) in another dimension's Superboy movie in *Superboy* #145 (Mar 68).
- Linda Danvers became the star of a jungle epic in *Action* #372 (Feb 69).

Got a favorite of your own? Write to Oh, So? and let us know about it!



Mr. Silver Age says: Tinsel Town was intrigued, Linda, but one of two situations usually prevented the movies from being made.

Either a super-villain attacked during filming or the movie was merely a ploy by some dastardly villain. At least, that's what happened in the Marvel comics themselves, which is where Mr. Silver Age gets all his information about how life works.

Spider-Man on celluloid. Probably the hero most agreeable to this type of chicanery was Spider-Man. After all, the guy was appearing on TV four pages after that radioactive spider bit him! And two of his early villains were connected to the movies: Mysterio, a special-effects wizard gone bad, was introduced in #13 (Jun 64); and Joe Smith, a boxer turned actor, gained super-strength and a mad-on while making a movie in #38 (Jul 66).

Spidey's desire for silver-screen stardom bit him in the butt several times during his Silver Age career. The first came right after he beat Mysterio, which should have had his finely honed spider-sense buzzing. In "The Grotesque Adventure of The Green Goblin" in #14 (Jul 64), we got our first glimpse of Gobby, as he convinced a producer to make a movie starring his own green self and the wall-crawler.

Not knowing this guy would



Bankruptcy led to a *Fantastic Four* movie in *FF* #9 (Dec 62). OK, it was *The FF* who were bankrupt and *The Sub-Mariner* produced the movie, but it still gives hope for our Earth's version. Someday.



The Green Goblin talked Spidey into starring in a movie in *Amazing Spider-Man* #14 (Jul 64). Needless to say, this was Gobby's first appearance.



Spidey headed west to star in a movie with *The Human Torch* in "The Web & The Flame!" in *Amazing Spider-Man King-Size Special #4* (Nov 67). As usual, things didn't work out so well.

become Spidey's most hated foe, the producer agreed. Gobby flew off to find Spider-Man, and his presence quickly got mentioned on the radio. "It sounds like someone's imagining things," Petey said, running off to check. Oh, if only they had been.

Similarly not knowing The Goblin's plans, Spidey agreed to do the flick. But at rehearsals, he discovered the actors playing *The Enforcers* weren't amazing simulations after all.

Fortunately, the wall-crawler avoided their first attack and hid in a cave. Unfortunately, The Hulk was hiding there, too. Things went downhill from there, The Goblin escaped, and Spidey went on hiatus from Hollywood.

Our hero was more careful the next time, not that it did him any good. In "The Web and the Flame!" in *Amazing Spider-Man King Size Special #4* (Nov 67), Spidey saw The Torch acting out of control, so he intervened. It turned out Johnny was starring in a government-funded short feature called *The Torch Goes Wild!* It doesn't make much sense to me either, but, then, neither did *Mission: Impossible*.

The next day, the radio announced Paragon Productions was inspired by this boo-boo to want to sign Spider-Man to star in a movie with The Torch, who had already agreed. Spidey flew to Hollywood, he met up with The Torch, and they started filming.

The only problem was that Paragon Productions was owned by The Wizard and Mysterio.

The Wiz had decided to spend his ill-gotten gains setting up a studio (overnight, I might add) and lure our pals into a trap rather than fly to Rio and live like a king. And this guy was the brains of the outfit.

Needless to say, the web and the flame figured things out. But our dastardly villains had a back-up plan that had our heroes battling a King Kong-sized gorilla, no doubt boosting



DD roamed La-La Land looking for his secretary-turned-actress, Karen Page, in *DD #64* (May 70, left). He wound up getting on a TV show — with his old foe, *The Stunt-Master*, where the acting bug bit him in *DD #67* (Aug 70, right)

sales through the stratosphere. It always worked at DC.

A fantastic film. Spidey wasn't the first Marvel hero to flirt with fame and fortune. The Fantastic Four had been finagled into a fake flick in "The End of the Fantastic Four" in *FF #9* (Dec 62). (You'd have thought that might have made Johnny a little more curious before signing on with The Wizard and Mysterio, but caution was never his strong suit.)

Our fantastic quartet got roped into this deal the same way Spidey always did — they needed money. Much like their comics company some years later, their bills mounted and they declared bankruptcy. Namor the Sub-Mariner heard this tidbit on his underwater television. (He must have had cable.) He set up SM Studios (get it?) and smooth-talked them into starring in a movie for \$1 million.

Naturally, it was a trap. But The FF overcame all the deadly predicaments, including Subby's marriage proposal to Sue. As they were about to pound noogies on Namor's noggin, Sue pointed out that their battles had been filmed and it would make a lot more sense for Namor to live up to the contract, produce the movie, pay The FF, and go away. So he did. Too bad Sue's not on staff at Marvel today, or we might have something better to watch than a grainy bootleg.

Daredevil stunts. DD, too, got a chance to yell, "Hey, that's not in the script!" He went to La-La Land



searching for his secretary-turned-actress Karen Page in "Suddenly ... The Stunt-Master!" in *Daredevil #64* (May 70). DD's former foe was being blackmailed into committing a crime on a movie set by a shady producer, and DD helped him out of his jam. DD then tracked down Karen and helped solve a murder mystery on her set in #65-66.

In #67, he was asked to guest-star in the pilot episode of the new TV series *Stunt-Master* had agreed to do. For some odd reason, The Stilt-Man decided this presented the perfect opportunity to disguise himself as Stunt-Master and attack DD. Why am I hearing the music to *Mission: Impossible* in the background?

Hercules, the legendary movie. Hercules also got the acting bug and signed a movie deal with producer

Mr. Pluto in *Journey into Mystery* #125 (Feb 66). Unfortunately, this Pluto actually was Pluto, aka Hades, the Olympian ruler of the Underworld, and the deal gave Pluto the rights to Herc's soul. In other words, it was a standard Hollywood contract.

In the next few issues, Thor acted as Herc's agent and literally went to hell and back for his new client to set things straight. Since the series became *The Mighty Thor* with #126, Pluto didn't stand much chance.

This is not to say that DC heroes had a much better time of it. Some of my favorites are listed in the tower at left. Check 'em out and don't forget to bring some popcorn. (And special thanks to Marvel's mad historian, Kurt Busiek, for helping me (koff!) remember a few of these movie appearances.)

WEEKS LATER, ALL AMERICA ACCLAIMS A NEW MOTION PICTURE HIT, LITTLE DREAMING OF THE AMAZING TALE BEHIND THE FILM! THE FANTASTIC FOUR ONCE AGAIN HAVE THE MONEY TO CARRY ON THEIR UNIQUE LIVES' WORK, AND OUR SAGA IS ENDED!



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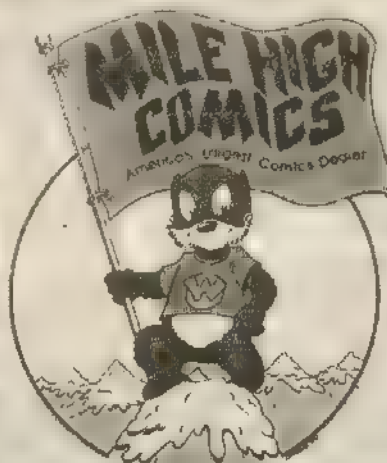
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By Maggie Thompson

• Mike Allred's *Red Rocket 7* (1998, Dark Horse, ISBN 1-56971-347-2, \$29.95) is one of those controversial projects not done to accommodate traditional comic-book-collecting formats. This should mean that the design is necessitated by the project — and, indeed, the art and package seemed appropriate to each other in individual issues.



However, apparently, not enough thought was given to the format in which it would appear in *trade paperback*. What readers have as a result is a book in which chunks of panels are lost in the binding. At any rate, *Red 7* is only one of a number of identical alien clones, and he's fleeing alien opponents and getting wrapped up in the formations of popular music from Elvis on. It may work for readers who are deeply into pop. Or they may feel that it's a cynical exploitation of the field, as Allred bends history into his own fiction of interstellar conflict, self-realization, and rock music. There's bonus background material in the compilation.

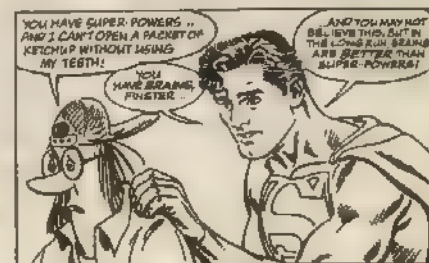
• Teri Sue Wood's *Wandering Star #3* trade paperback (black and white, 1998, Sirius, ISBN 1-57989-012-1, \$14.95) contains the issues which concluded her maxi-series — a story which found a steadily increasing audience. This is *not* designed to be an entry point to the series, and there's no introduction to explain the characters or the set-up of the science-fiction story of a small band's fight against overwhelming odds (with viewpoint character Casi occasionally shown telling the story



years later). But the paperback is out there and available now — and so are the earlier two paperback compilations. Those who have followed the series will be delighted to have the story in such convenient format; those yet to see it should start with paperback #1. Casi says (at different points), "Maybe all we can have is temporary happiness," and, "Everything that defined who I am is gone. What do I have to live for?" You'll find out here.

• Not (yet, at least) a trade paperback, Sergio Aragonés' *Fanboy* (DC, \$2.50 @) will begin to ship from DC shortly. The two issues sent out for preview show occasional tender moments in the broader parody — and the story was designed to provide interaction between Aragonés and other comics creators. For example, the first issue (Mar 99) not only involves usual Aragonés cohort Mark Evanier but also Jerry Ordway, Bernie Wrightson, Matt Haley, and Tom Simmons in a take on Superman; the second adds Gil Kane, Kevin Nowlan, Dave Gibbons, Wendy Pini, and Will Blyberg — all in a massive exploration of Green Lantern High-schooler and comics buff Finster says, "I some-

times can't keep track of where *comics* leave off and *reality* begins! It's the basic premise of this comic book ... and my life!" Satiric views of comica buffs and their interactions with their idols and the rest of the universe have been done before, sure, but both in concept and execution these are, so far, outstanding. And there really *is* a point to each episode ("We're *all* Clark Kent. Some folks just haven't figured out which phone booth to change in."), and each episode is complete in itself. That, alone, would make the series a rarity. Don't miss it.



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diers at the front sooner than Vargas' girls.

Dubbed the Rockwell of Cheesecake, Elvgren earned the distinction by painting hundreds of pin-ups of radiant young women, each of whom could be "the girl next door" (an idea Hugh Hefner would later build an empire with). Unmistakably wholesome with a glowing, apple-cheeked beauty, they are also undeniably sexy.

Like Rockwell, Elvgren needed a story premise for his pictures: His pin-up is an actress caught in the midst of an activity — bicycling, wading, walking the dog, grocery shopping, dressing, making home improvements — at which, betrayed by a "naughty breeze" or errant clothing, her gartered, nyloned legs become more exposed than their owner might have intended. But (and this is Elvgren's distinctive achievement), despite her surprise at her predicament, she doesn't seem to mind. These are the artist's celebrated "compromised cuties," who display an almost conspiratorial charm, seeming to glory in the accidental exhibition of their charms, conveying thereby a sense of silvery laughter, joy, and warmth to the viewer.

The book alternates biographical text sections with ample portfolios of the artist's work, decade by decade. These portfolio sections present the book's most unusual feature. Elvgren worked from photographs of his models, not from life. In these sections, the photographs are printed next to his paintings, so readers may see the sources of his inspiration as well as the ways he improved upon nature — making his women more voluptuous than the model, their necklines lower, waist narrower, legs longer, dresses hiked a little higher, just a little more bare shoulder.

Even more unusual, some of the paintings are printed on translucent vellum that is superimposed over the photographs upon which they are based, so we can see "through" to the source,

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\$20 REWARD! Alien's Resurrection Chestbuster wanted. Contact me: Craig Powell, 3579 San Carlos Drive, Salt Lake City, UT 84119

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so to speak. In the same expository vein, the book concludes with a section discussing in some detail Elvgren's working methods.

Throughout, Collins supplies captions for every painting, comparing the artist's interpretation with his photographic reference, drawing attention to this detail and that, often supplying another scrap of biographical information. And I have to marvel at his verbal ingenuity: He seems never to repeat himself in finding different ways to say "sexy" in the most refined and discreet manner.

At first, Elvgren's fantasy females seemed completely innocent creatures, caught in dishabille through some happenstance over which they had no control. True, despite a coy self-conscious expression (their pursed lips, a "kiss of surprised embarrassment," in Collins' delicious locution), they seem to enjoy the attention this accident confers upon them. But it wasn't until a generation later that the women seemed worldly and deliberate in flaunting their assets, gazing directly at the viewer with a knowing smile.

In virtually all of his paintings, Elvgren put more background than many of his colleagues, again obeying his Rockwellian storytelling impulse: A story needs a setting. But he declined ever to assign any social significance to his work. These were simply pretty, sexy young women showing off. And the artist needed no excuse to indulge them.

He also seemed to respect his subjects, as Collins observes. Said Elvgren, "They do not look like kept women."

There are very few completely nude paintings in the Elvgren oeuvre. He did much of his work in an age when a hiked shirt and a flash of the garter of a stockinged leg was considered highly erotic. And in the calendars for his latest work (for NAPA), the women are fully clothed, albeit in

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BUYING PRE-1930 Sunday pages, full color fulls! Paying high prices! See my "Today's Collector" ad! Michael Dice, Drawer 1748, Cortez, CO 81321. 970-564-9018. E-mail: oldcomic@fone.net

TARZAN SUNDAYS by Russ Manning (1967-70) wanted. SASE for additional comic strip/ reprint sales/ want lists. Todd Goldberg, 215 Holmestrest Road, Jenkintown, PA 19046.

shorts and other sporting attire.

The book itself is an elegant product of the bookmaker's craft, high production values throughout: slick paper, color on virtually every page.

The earliest portfolio section in the book (the 1930s) uses a great many very small pictures, probably because they are reproduced from the small products they originally appeared upon — blotter-calendars and the like. But in the later portfolios, the paintings are of a more satisfying size — although not all full-page.

The portfolio sections sometimes print the source photo larger than the painting; sometimes, the other way around. All the photos are in black-and-white because Elvgren wanted the clarity they gave to shadows.

Reproduction is excellent in most instances. Some of the paintings seem more sharply defined than others. Some of the slightly fuzzy images may have been taken from printed material rather than original art. But the characteristic warmly cheerful, rosy-cheeked young woman emerges, regardless.

Elvgren "died broke," according to his son, Drake, who joined Collins as co-author of the book. The cheesecake photographer replaced the pin-up illustrator in the wake of Playboy's success in the mid-1950s, and Elvgren, who then wondered if he had erred in choosing his specialty, found the market for his paintings drying up. He did the NAPA calendars and some advertising illustration, but that, too, was disappearing, as television sucked up business' advertising dollars.

Still, before he died, Elvgren saw the revival of interest in pin-up paintings, his in particular, and probably realized that his work would live after him.

And in this book, it does indeed. Brilliantly.



Pretty Girl Plight. Elvgren. His *Life and Art* is without question the best book ever published about a pin-up artist. Recent volumes about such voyeurs in oil as George Petty (1894-1975) and Alberto Vargas (1896-1982) are excellent: They offer numerous examples of the painter's work in generous dimension, and they sketch the artist's life in bold outline. No one could wish for more. And for that reason, the arrival of Max Allan Collins' book about Gil Elvgren (1914-1980) is deliciously gratuitous in the sense that we encounter in its 200 giant 10"x12" pages much more than we could reasonably expect. And at only \$39.95 (from Bud Plant, if not at your corner bookstore), it's a bargain.



A student of famed Coca-Cola ad artist Haddon Sundblom, Elvgren produced similarly luminous paintings in his calendar art for Louis F. Dow, beginning in 1937, and then for Brown & Bigelow, starting in the mid-1940s. Although he seemingly did not attain the celebrity of either Petty or Vargas, Elvgren did pin-ups that reached sol-

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- O. SPACE RESERVATIONS:** available for camera ready ads only. Must be made prior to ad deadline. Reserved space must be paid for even if ad does not arrive on time.
- P. PRE-PRINTED INSERTS:** are available in Comics Buyer's Guide. Inquire for additional information and technical specifications.
- Q. CIRCULATION:** is throughout the United States and Canada by subscription and single copy sales by agents in shops and other outlets.
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A completed reference form must be in our confidential files before any buy, sell or trade ad can be placed. See below. Minors are required to furnish a statement of responsibility from their parents or guardian before their advertising can be accepted. Payment must accompany an advertisement and must be in the form of a personal check drawn on U.S., Canadian or Mexican bank, money orders, international money orders, cashier's checks, or with your VISA, MasterCard, American Express or NOVUS credit card. Send your credit card number, expiration date, and the name on the card, along with permission to charge the card for your ad, with your advertising copy.

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 (Krause Publ.)

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AD DEADLINE	NO.	ISSUE	AD DEADLINE	NO.	ISSUE
Tues., Jan. 5, 1999	1315	Jan. 29, 1999	Tues., Jan. 26, 1999	1318	Feb. 19, 1999
Tues., Jan. 12, 1999	1316	Feb. 5, 1999	Tues., Feb. 2, 1999	1319	Feb. 26, 1999
Tues., Jan. 19, 1999	1317	Feb. 12, 1999	Tues., Feb. 9, 1999	1320	Mar. 5, 1999

DISPLAY ADVERTISING

(Cost per ad per issue: ads must run consecutively)

AD SIZE	ISSUE	ISSUES	ISSUES	ISSUES	ISSUES
A. Eighth Page (4-1/4" x 2-1/4")	\$103	\$101	\$99	\$95	\$87
B. Quarter Page Vertical (4-1/4" x 5-1/4")	\$195	\$192	\$188	\$180	\$164
Quarter Page Horizontal (10" x 2-1/4")	\$195	\$192	\$188	\$180	\$164
C. Half Page Vertical (4-1/4" x 11") or	\$303	\$297	\$291	\$279	\$255
Half Page Horizontal (10" x 5-1/4")	\$303	\$297	\$291	\$279	\$255
D. Full Page (10" x 11")	\$546	\$536	\$525	\$503	\$459

CLASSIFIED DISPLAY

(Cost per ad: ads must run consecutively to earn contract discounts.)

AD SIZE	ISSUE	ISSUES	ISSUES	ISSUES	ISSUES
1. One Inch (2-1/4" x 1")	\$22.00	\$21.00	\$20.00	\$19.00	\$18.00
2. Two Inches (2-1/4" x 2")	\$31.00	\$30.00	\$29.00	\$28.00	\$26.00
3. Three Inches (2-1/4" x 3")	\$39.00	\$38.00	\$37.00	\$36.00	\$33.00

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Our "Classified" ads are heavily read. Base rates are 40¢ per word with discounts for multiple issues. Please print and punctuate - we are not responsible for error due to long-hand and illegible copy. For more information see classified ad form in the classified section. Credit card customers can place word ads TOLL FREE - Call 1-800-942-0673. (This is for classified word ads only.)

UNIT ADVERTISING:

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Collectors Showcase Units are 3-1/4" wide x 1-5/8" high and can be bought in multiples. All typesetting is done by Krause Publications and is included in the price.

Cost per ad per issue: ads must run consecutively to earn contract discounts

1 Issue	6 Issues	13 Issues	26 Issues	52 Issues
\$31.00	\$30.00	\$29.00	\$28.00	\$26.00

B. COMICS TRADER ADS

"No-frills" advertising with a price to match. Design your own ad - just type your ad clearly on an 8-1/2" x 8-1/2" sheet of paper. We will reduce your Trader ad to fit a 1/4 page space (3-1/4" x 3-1/4"). Super Traders should be typed on an 8-1/2" x 8-1/2" sheet of paper which will be reduced to fit a 5" x 5" space.

Regular Trader

(Cost per ad per issue: ads must run consecutively to earn contract discounts. Limit 6 Trader spaces per page per advertiser.)

1 Issue	6 Issues	13 Issues	26 Issues	52 Issues
\$43.00	\$42.00	\$41.00	\$40.00	\$36.00

Super Trader

(Cost per ad per issue: ads must run consecutively to earn contract discounts. Limit 2 Super Trader spaces per advertiser per page.)

1 Issue	6 Issues	13 Issues	26 Issues	52 Issues
\$114.00	\$112.00	\$110.00	\$105.00	\$96.00

C. RETAILER DIRECTORY \$3.50 per issue

Leads fans to your cash register! List your store name, address, phone number and 15 words of description. Sold in 26 and 52 week increments. It's targeted more to the comics buff than the yellow pages - and it's more cost effective. If you sell COMICS BUYER'S GUIDE in your store, we will publish your listing in bold face type at no extra charge.



Some more belated observations and recollections about the MECYF '98, the sizable convention held in Mexico City last summer ...

Dan T's Inferno

OK, the issue numbers aren't etched in my mind, but the scenes sure are.

I'm joining Peter David in honoring the most memorable pre-1979 comics scenes and can't quite pinpoint them. But surely you remember when:

- The NRA sought welfare payments for "poverty case" The Two-Gun Kid.
- Traffic ground to a halt in the Lee-Kirby Atlas classic "Carrgo, The Creature That Drove a Gas-Guzzler like a Real American."
- The issue of *Crime Does Not Pay* where the Wendy's manager insisted that Crime pay, but his kids got in free.
- Dr. Strange got ticked off when Elvis shot out The All-Seeing Eye of Agamotto.
- On their honeymoon night, Reed Richards confessed to Sue that he had been wearing a cosmic-ray-proof athletic cup at the time of their fateful journey into space.
- Norse mythology and the Biblical Flood account intertwined, when Loki put Odin's hand in a glass of warm water during the Odinsleep.
- Jay and Joan Garrick expected a swinging weekend, when Barry Allen explained that people on Earth-1 "vibrate differently."
- Little Lulu valiantly performed first aid, when the glass ceiling in Tubby's all-boys club crashed and severed an artery.

— Dan Tyree

The hotel floor upon which most of the guests were staying had a sort of private hang-out where we would usually convene in the morning for breakfast. It was always a low-key affair, giving everyone a chance to hang out and shmoo while looking down at the view of Mexico City.

One morning we were presented with some unexpected amusement: Several of our number were appearing on an early-morning talk show. As I recall, it was Denny O'Neil, Mike Carlin, and a costumed Spider-Man who had been sent by Marvel.

The problem was, the hosts didn't speak English. So questions would be posed, translated into English, the guests would answer, and the questions would be translated back for the comprehension of the viewing audience. We were fortunate that morning, however, as Sergio Aragonés was there to provide us with a translation of what was being said.

So there we were, grouped around the TV set, watching the questions being lobbed at the Americans and having the lag time filled by Sergio's instantaneous translations.

None of us were anticipating potential disaster.

"Tell us, Spider-Man," said the host via translator, "what sort of advice would you give to the youth of Mexico?"

Spidey, looking as earnest as one can be while wearing an all-concealing mask, said without hesitation, "Work hard, fight crime, and stay in school."

Immediately, as if everyone in the room had just been jammed up the backside with a 10-meter cattle prod, we angled forward as though the TV set had suddenly developed a magnetic field that was yanking us toward it, like something out of *Poltergeist*.

"Fight crime!" we shouted with incredulity, practically in unison.

Well, that was perfect. That was just perfect. All of us saw the same potential, awful scenario playing out. Thanks to the Amazing Spider-Numskull, kids all over Mexico were going to go grab guns out of daddy's closet and start prowling the streets looking for purse snatchers, muggers, and low-lives. I was thinking about how we'd been warned that the streets of Mexico

"The whole trick — if you ever find yourself in a similar situation — is that you never stop moving."

City could be dicey, if one travelled alone. The implication was that crime could easily find you. Which meant, by the same token, that crime could easily find one of the hordes of newly benighted crime-fighters.

Think the concern was over-exaggerated? All Soupy Sales had to do was say once, just once, "Hey, kids, go into your dad's wallets, take that funny green stuff, and send it to me!" and he was deluged with mail (ostensibly Monopoly money for the most part, but still ...). So to have an authority figure like Spider-Man urging young Mexican kids to "fight crime" —

The translator, meantime, had not missed a beat. And Sergio provided us with the instantaneous translation of what the interpreter was saying for the edification of Mexican youth:

"Work hard," Sergio said, "obey the law — and stay in school."

That was not what Spider-Man had just said. "Obey the law?" someone asked. Sergio nodded.

Palpable relief flooded through the entire assemblage. The TV translator had just made a magnificent recovery. Realizing the potential disaster of what Spider-Man was advocating, he reconfigured it into something that was in the same spirit but not remotely as incendiary. It was as deft a save as anyone had ever seen Spider-Man in the comics make.

The panel set-up on the vast stage was as nothing that I'd ever seen at any convention. It looked as if we were lounging in someone's living room. There were huge, cushiony sofas and chairs, a coffee table, and foot-rests. If only the furniture had all been covered in plastic, it would have been like the Jewish homes of my youth. (Does anyone do that any more?)

I served on several panels, although on most of them the vast majority of the questions went to Denny and Mike (neither of whom urged young people to fight crime, so that was something of a relief).

But definitely the oddest panel was "Wives of the comics pros." It was a strange ensemble, since it consisted of Mary Fran and Sue Grant, the wives of Denny O'Neil and Alan Grant, respectively. But also present were Barbara Kesel, Karl's wife, a comics pro in her own right, and Kathleen, who is my girlfriend, not my wife. Barbara, sharing a couch with Kathleen, nonetheless required extra room so that she could have the opportunity to physically "bounce" between being Barbara the wife and Barbara the writer. A vote was eventually held at the end, as the audience determined which Barbara they preferred. (It turned out to be a tie.)

Questions they received were the

"What's it like living with a writer?" type. The most lively discussion occurred when the women were asked which comics they themselves read and enjoyed, and Mary Fran turned to the others and said, "OK, husbands and significant others are off the table; otherwise we're all just going to round robin with them." Happily, they were all able to come up examples outside of their men-folk. (That's as opposed to those spouses or girlfriends — and I have encountered them — who don't know from, or care about, the comics industry. Moreover, they don't want to know.)

They were also asked if they had met their significant others before or after they'd become "famous." For Kathleen, it was the latter — except she had no idea who I was. I first met her a number of years ago when she was selling various of her hand-and-rod puppets at the Atlanta Fantasy Fair. I bought one of them, a Klingon which I still have, and, after I walked away, various committee members ran up to her all excited and said, "Peter David bought one of your puppets!" They were beyond hyperactive about it. And Kathleen, failing to see the monumental significance of this action, kind of shrugged and said, "Yeah. Good." She went home that evening, spotted a copy of one of my *Star Trek* novels on her bookshelf, and said, "Oooohhh, that's who that is."

During the panel, Kathleen displayed a hand-and-rod "Will Robinson" puppet she'd made. The puppet was also asked questions, which he fielded as well as could be expected, considering he had someone's hand up his back.

Convention security continued to remain hyper about crowds. We were escorted everywhere, in anticipation and concern over being mobbed at any given moment. It became something of a game during one autographing session, as Mary Fran, Susan, and Kathleen started a contest to see who could make it all the way to the women's rest room and back without attracting a phalanx of guards. Kathleen, using her best Xena Warrior Princess ninja mode, was the only one who managed to make it all the way there and back. (Although, unlike Xena, she didn't feel obliged to strip naked and cover herself with black body make-up to accomplish it — which is kind of a shame, because it probably would have made her the hit of the convention.)

At the far end of the convention center from where we normally hung out, there was a table belonging to a *Star Trek* club. They were very anxious for me to go see their table, but the convention was reaching its last hours, and I still hadn't managed to get over there. I'd promised I'd make it, and I

don't like breaking a promise.

So, completely on the spur of the moment, I turned to the translator-escort who'd been assigned to me for that day and said, "I'm heading over to the *Star Trek* club. Bye."

He blanched. "Well, we need time to set up an escort." He wanted to make sure that there would be a coterie of guards who would surround me to stave off crowds.

But by that point, I'd had it with being escorted. "It's fans. I can handle fans. I'm not a rock star. I'll be fine." And, before he could muster a squad of protectors, I was gone. Seeing no other option, he immediately dashed to my side — Sancho to my Quixote — and we began the long haul from one end of the hall to the other.

At first, fans glanced our way and didn't quite believe that I wasn't surrounded. Normally, when any of us were on the move, lines of arm-linked guards stood between the fans and us. But here I was, marching along with a single companion. Thoroughly accessible. Eminently stoppable.

Nobody tried.

The whole trick — if you ever find yourself in a similar situation — is that you never stop moving. Like a shark, if you stop moving, you're dead. I simply kept walking. That didn't mean that I was rude. When fans approached, I talked — and moved. When they produced things for me to sign, I signed then — and moved. I never slackened my pace. It takes some serious kind of hardcase to physically block your path and prevent you from advancing. There may be people like that out there, but none of them happened to be around at that particular time. I made it all the way to the *Star Trek* club table without significant problems.

My time at the table was limited, of course. Because, naturally, once I was visiting the club, I was stationary. As I spoke to club members, I kept a wary eye out and saw, after a few minutes, that word was leaking out and fans were starting to converge. My escort saw it, too. Like Schwarzenegger in *Terminator 2*, he said, "Time to go." I said quick good-byes, and started back. Same thing happened: I encountered folks along the way, signed material, walked, and talked — and made it all the way back again without significant problems.

I felt I had achieved a great — albeit minor — triumph. There's something to be said for being treated like a rock star. Then again, there's something to be said for normality. Or at least, as normal as abnormality will allow.

Peter David, writer of stuff, can be written to at To Be Continued Inc., P.O. Box 239, Bayport, NY 11705.

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100	4.35	5.65	8.00
500	19.35	24.00	24.00
1000	28.45	33.75	58.00
5000	124.70	152.45	273.00
PCode:	SNC2	SNC3	SNC3R

REGULAR MARVEL		7-1/8 x 10-3/8	
Fits 1962 - 1972 Comics		RESEALABLE	
	2 MI	3 MI	3 MI
100	4.35	5.65	8.00
500	19.35	24.00	35.90
1000	28.45	33.75	59.65
5000	124.70	152.45	273.00
PCCode:	SMAR2	SMAR3	SMAR3R

DELL & SILVER AGE 7-1/2 x 10-3/8 Fits 1950 - 1962 Comics		
	2 MH	3 MH
100	4.85	6.20
500	19.80	24.55
1000	35.50	41.10
5000	158.90	189.30
PCode:	SDSA2	SDSA3

GOLDEN AGE COMICS 7-7/8 x 10-3/8 Fits Pre-1950 Comics		
	2 MH	3 MH
100	5.15	7.10
500	20.10	27.90
1000	36.43	41.70
5000	170.00	220.70
PCode:	SGA2	SGA3

MAGAZINES		STANDARD 8-5/8 x 11-1/8		LARGE 8-7/8 x 11-1/8	
	2 MLL	3 MII	2 MII	3 MII	
100	7.25	9.35	8.00	10.30	
500	28.35	34.00	31.10	37.40	
1000	43.90	55.85	48.20	61.45	
PCODE:	SMAG2	SMAG3	SMAG12	SMAG13	

LIFE MAGAZINE		REGULAR		LARGE	
		10-1/4 x 12-1/4		10-7/8 x 14-1/4	
		2 MH	3 MI	2 MH	3 MI
50		4.90	6.70	5.95	7.60
100		8.65	9.30	9.20	11.00
500		37.50	41.90	40.20	48.45
1000		59.75	77.55	66.45	86.40
PCODE:		SLMR2	SLMR3	SLMLC2	SLMLC3

	TABLOID (No Flap)		REGULAR 12 x 19		LARGE 14-1/4 x 19	
	2 Mil	3 Mil	2 Mil	3 Mil	2 Mil	3 Mil
50	8.90	11.10	9.20	13.25		
100	12.40	16.45	13.55	19.40		
500	47.05	64.35	51.75	75.95		
1000	89.30	122.20	98.30	144.30		
PCCode:	STAR2	STAR3	STABL2	STABL3		

ORIGINAL ART (No Flap)	REGULAR 10-1/2 x 19	LARGE 11-1/2 x 19
	3 Mil	3 Mil
100	12.90	14.20
500	49.55	54.90
1000	93.90	104.40
PCode:	SOAS	SOAL

Note: Bags have a 1 1/2" flap unless noted.

BACKING BOARDS

- **ECONOMY** - .030" Thick non Acid-Free Grade. White on one side. For Intermediate Storage.
- **INTERMEDIATE** - .028" Thick Acid-Free, White on both sides. For Long Term Storage.
- **SUPERIOR** - .040" Thick Acid Free, White all the way thru with 3% Alkaline Buffer. For Indefinite Term Storage.

DESCRIPTION / SIZE	PRODUCT CODE	• GRADE	GAUGE (in)	25	50	100	500	1000
NEW COMIC 6-11/16 x 10-3/8	KCB30N	ECONOMY	0.030	2.90	5.35	8.25	29.10	53.75
	KAF28N	INTERMEDIATE	0.028	5.90	10.55	16.50	66.65	117.50
	KAF40N	SUPERIOR	0.040	10.30	19.10	33.30	144.70	251.80
REGULAR MARVEL 6-15/16 x 10-3/8	KCB30R	ECONOMY	0.030	2.90	5.35	8.25	29.10	53.75
	KAF28R	INTERMEDIATE	0.028	5.90	10.55	16.50	66.65	117.50
	KAF40R	SUPERIOR	0.040	10.30	19.10	33.30	144.70	251.80
DELL & SILVER AGE 7-3/16 x 10-3/8	KCB30DSA	ECONOMY	0.030	3.55	5.55	8.75	35.45	60.00
	KAF28DSA	INTERMEDIATE	0.028	7.10	11.25	17.40	70.85	124.60
	KAF40DSA	SUPERIOR	0.040	11.00	19.35	36.65	153.50	266.85
GOLDEN AGE 7-11/16 x 10-3/8	KCB30GA	ECONOMY	0.030	3.80	5.90	9.25	37.25	63.55
	KAF28GA	INTERMEDIATE	0.028	7.60	11.75	18.50	74.45	131.65
	KAF40GA	SUPERIOR	0.040	11.85	21.50	37.50	162.70	282.95

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25	66.65
50	116.35
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10	33.65
25	66.65
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25	92.55
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100	235.00 +Frt

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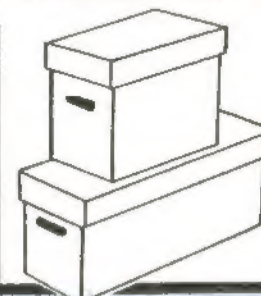
2	\$9.40
5	21.05
10	32.65
25	67.45
50	100.00+Fr
100	180.00+Fr

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7-3/4 x 11 x 26
Holds up to 300 Comics

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100	250.00 + Frt

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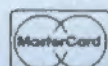
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